THE

LABOUR MONTHLY

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

Editor: R. PALME DUTT

Volume 16 January, 1934 Number 1

STALIN ON LENIN

Published at

7 JOHN STREET, Theobald's Road, LONDON, W.C.1

PRICE SIXPENCE

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM

The article which appeared in the September and October issues by L. RUDAS on the above subject, will reappear shortly in pamphlet form. It includes many important revisions and additions that will make it of new interest to all readers as well as to others.

FULL DETAILS in the FEBRUARY ISSUE

Pamphlets Already Published

MARXISM AFTER FIFTY YEARS.
R. PALME DUTT.
2d. each (2½d. post free).
12 copies 1s. 6d.; 50 copies 6s. 3d. (7s. 0d. post free); 100 copies 12s. 0d. (13s. 3d. post free).

HOW LENIN STUDIED MARX.
N. KRUPSKAYA.
1d. each (1½d. post free).
12 copies 9d.; 50 copies 3s. 2d. (3s. 8d. post free); 100 copies 6s. 0d. (7s. 0d. post free).

IRELAND'S PATH TO FREEDOM.
Introduction by SEAN MURRAY.
1d. each (1½d. post free).
12 copies 9d.; 50 copies 3s. 2d. (3s. 8d. post free); 100 copies 6s. 0d. (7s. 0d. post free).

Of all Workers' Bookshops or Newsagents, or direct from the Labour Monthly Office.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Labour Monthly

Editorial and Publishing Offices :
7 JOHN STREET, LONDON, W.C. 1.
Telephone : HOLBORN 6656

¶ The Editor of *The Labour Monthly* invites contributions. He cannot, however, be held responsible for MSS. sent to him or undertake to enter into correspondence regarding rejected contributions, although every endeavour will be made to return the same when a stamped and addressed envelope for that purpose is enclosed.

1934: *Subscription Rates*
[PAID IN ADVANCE]

British Isles:

One year - 7/- Six months - 3/6

Abroad:

One year 8/- or $2.00 Six months 4/- or $1.00

American Subscription Representative:—Philip Novick, 270 Broadway, Suite 1401, New York, N.Y., U.S.A.

The Labour Monthly is also obtainable wholesale from Workers' Bookshop, 16 King St., Covent Garden, W.C.2.

Advertisement Rates: £5 os. od. per cover page and pro rata. £4 os. od. per text page and pro rata (⅓th page minimum).

BOUND VOLUMES

Volume I	£5 os. od.	*Volume IX*	£1 1s. od.
Volume II	£3 3s. od.	*Volume X*	15s. od.
Volume III	£3 3s. od.	*Volume XI*	10s. 6d.
Volume IV	£3 3s. od.	*Volume XII*	10s. 6d.
Volume V	£2 2s. od.	*Volume XIII*	10s. 6d.
Volume VI	£1 10s. od.	*Volume XIV*	10s. 6d.
Volume VII	£1 10s. od.	*Volume XV*	10s. 6d.
Volume VIII	£1 1s. od.		

Loose copies of last five volumes can be exchanged for a bound volume for 4s. 6d. Single loose copies are available of almost every issue of *The Labour Monthly* since 1921.

The articles in *The Labour Monthly* are indexed in the International Index to Periodicals, New York, N.Y., as well as in the annual index in each December issue.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Labour Monthly" Conference

OF FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4th, 1934

Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C. 1

3 p.m.—6.30 p.m.

NINETEEN-THIRTY-FOUR—a tremendous series of problems for the working-class movement. How can the LABOUR MONTHLY handle them? The Conference can clarify this question and show what is the distinctive rôle of the LABOUR MONTHLY in the working-class movement. So as to make this rôle effective the discussion will be carried forward to the problems of how the LABOUR MONTHLY's influence and circulation can be extended: how its financial support can be increased, the list of guarantors built up further, and as to the best methods of advertising, &c. Finally, the Conference should discuss the methods of future organisation, including how to ensure that regular assistance in the work of the LABOUR MONTHLY be continued by the formation of some kind of working group.

Readers outside London who are unable to attend are urged to write in their suggestions to be put before the Conference.

APPEAL FORM

(SEE OVERLEAF)

Date.....

In response to the Appeal (overleaf) I enclose a donation of £ : s. d. towards the funds of the LABOUR MONTHLY

(*Signed*).....

Address .....

.....

Date.....

In response to the Appeal (overleaf) I wish to become a guarantor to the funds of the LABOUR MONTHLY.

I enclose my first { monthly / quarterly / ½-yearly } * guarantee of £ : s. d.

(*Signed*).....

Address .....

.....

*Strike out the words that do not apply.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

AC...

THE LABOUR MONTHLY

A Magazine of International Labour

VOLUME 16 JANUARY, 1934 NUMBER 1

Editor: R. PALME DUTT

CONTENTS

Notes of the Month - - - - Page 5
AFTER TEN YEARS
By R. P. D.

Lenin - - - - - - - ,, 25
By J. STALIN

Features of the Labour Movement - - ,, 32
By V. I. LENIN

The Meaning of the New Unemployment Bill ,, 36
By WAL HANNINGTON

A Robbery of the Public - - - ,, 44
By HARRY DUBOW

The Irish Labour Party and Fascism - - ,, 48
By BRIAN O'NEILL

World of Labour - - - - ,, 53
GREAT BRITAIN: Documents on the United Front

Book Reviews - - - - - ,, 57
From 1844 to 1934 - - *By* R.P.D.
Religion and Communism - *By* R.W.B.
A Bolshevik at Work - - *By* G.W.M.

Published at
7 JOHN STREET, Theobald's Road, LONDON, W.C.1.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LAST month it was announced that the LABOUR MONTHLY *had decided to postpone the Conference of readers in order that they may have the opportunity of concentrating all their energies on rallying support for the* MONTHLY *in its critical position.*

Considerable support has been forthcoming from numerous readers. The guarantee list is growing; the donations for which an appeal was made to pay off the debt have been coming in. Nevertheless, the LABOUR MONTHLY *is by no means out of the wood. £300 now is needed to pay off the debt and a monthly guarantee of £35; towards the debt £40 has been donated and some £5 in monthly guarantees. A very big effort is necessary if the* LABOUR MONTHLY *is to be saved.*

There are over 4,000 readers of the MONTHLY; *if each contributed a donation of 1s. this would go a long way to pay off the debt. If each agreed to guarantee a rate equivalent to 2/- a year, i.e. 2d. a month, the future of the* LABOUR MONTHLY *would be practically assured.*

Those who have already sent in donations or become guarantors indicate that the MONTHLY *is valued as almost no other magazine all over the world.*

> *From New Zealand a reader in enclosing a donation, says: "I am very sorry to see . . . that the* LABOUR MONTHLY *is in grave danger of going under. I am only working part time but if I possibly can I will send a further donation later on. . . ." From London a donor refers to the* MONTHLY *as "the best magazine devoted to the labour and working-class cause generally." A reader from Lanarkshire responds by sending no less than half his week's Old Age Pension. From South Africa a trade union leader claims that the* LABOUR MONTHLY *"is the magazine that I look forward to more than any other that I receive and particularly the Notes of the Month." An original subscriber and supporter of the* MONTHLY *in London, in sending his guarantee, says: "The clarity, candour, honest documentation and willingness to discuss opposing points of view in the working-class movement, the sharp but honest criticism which have marked the* LABOUR MONTHLY *from the beginning are of the greatest value to the cause of the workers as a whole."*

Such examples of appreciation of the MONTHLY *from readers all over the world should spur on others to join with them in saving the* MONTHLY *from going under.*

Become a guarantor: send in your donation: fill in the form on page 2.

Make it possible for the MONTHLY *to announce on February 4, the date on which it has been decided to hold the postponed Conference of Readers, that the* MONTHLY *is out of the wood (see page 2 for fuller details of Conference).*

[SEE OVERLEAF

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NOTES OF THE MONTH

Lenin—1933-1934—The Measure of a Transformation—New Issues—Economic "Recovery"?—Realities—Disillusionment—Towards a Violent Outcome—Rumblings of War—The Crisis of the League—Reconstruction, Re-armament and Revision—British Re-armament—Britain and Germany—British Policy the Key—War Diplomacy—"Encirclement" Then and Now—Single Basic Policy—From Versailles to To-day—Locarno—Since Locarno—Fascism and International Politics—British Dilemmas—American-Soviet Relations—British Manœuvres—French-German Negotiations—Japanese Expansion Policy—The Aims of the Counter-Revolution

WITH the opening month of 1934 ten years have passed since the death of Lenin. What have these ten years shown? They have shown the development of the world crisis of capitalism from stage to stage of barbarism, anarchy and decay, reaching its highest point to-day through all these ten years, and shattering alike the temporary superficial stabilisation of the interim period and all the capitalist-reformist illusions built upon it. They have shown the advance and intensification of the class struggle to new and extreme forms, as the capitalist counter-revolution grows more desperate in the face of its approaching doom; the steeling of the revolutionary workers' ranks in the experience of rising battles, and the ever closer welding together of the Communist World Party, the leader of the world revolution. They have seen the advance of the Workers' Soviet Republic to greater and greater strength, outstripping already all the capitalist powers of the Old World, demonstrating to the world the triumphs of socialist construction in the midst of the crisis of capitalism, and constituting the unshaken fortress of the world working class in the midst of the capitalist counter-revolution. They have seen the spread of the national and colonial revolutionary struggles in Asia and Africa, and the establishment, now more and more firmly consolidated

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in the third year since its definite constitution, of the Chinese Soviet Republic, the sturdy younger brother and future constituent part of the Soviet Union. All these developments have proved anew the truth of Lenin's vision, based on Marxism, and the soundness of the foundations which he, in the leadership of world communism, was able to lay on every front, before death cut short his work. To-day, at the moment when the culmination of the world economic crisis and shattering of all stabilisation is visibly opening out the path of world development to new revolutionary issues and world war, the teaching of Lenin and the leadership of Lenin, carried onwards by the Communist International, are more than ever of life-and-death urgency for the whole world.

THE situation at the turn of 1933 to 1934 bears out this whole perspective. If 1933 opened under an angry sky, 1934 opens under an angrier. For 1933 has witnessed a series of collapses of the remaining bases of the old capitalist order, and headlong advance of the new violent courses of post-stabilisation capitalism. It has witnessed the collapse of the dollar, of the World Economic Conference, of the Disarmament Conference, of the last remains of Weimar "democracy," of German Social-Democracy, and the shaking of the League of Nations to its foundations. It has witnessed the victory and devil's march of Fascism in Germany, the unsettlement in Europe, the frenzied course of the Roosevelt emergency policies in the United States, the rising war in the Far East, and confessed open advance on every side to a new race in armaments. By the opening of 1934 the course to a new world war is visible to all. The interlocked issue of fascism and war dominates all issues in 1934.

WHAT was the situation at the opening of 1933? Germany was under von Schleicher. The United States was under Hoover. Japan and Germany were still in the League of Nations. The dollar was still on the gold standard. The question of Manchuria and the

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Anglo-American debts controversy dominated the international situation. There was talk at the opening of the year of the "Turn of the Tide" (*Observer*, January 1, 1933). Great hopes were expressed in the forthcoming World Economic Conference. Baldwin spoke of a "hopeful feeling" abroad. The President of the Federation of British Industries spoke of "not only hope, but quiet confidence." The *Daily Telegraph* (January 2, 1933) spoke of "Rising Hopes for 1933: Going Forward to Better Times," and found "unmistakeable signs" that we have "passed through the worst period of the unparalleled world depression." The *Economist* laid down four tasks for 1933. First, the settlement of the Manchurian question. Second, the settlement of Disarmament. Third, the settlement of the Debts question. Fourth, the settlement of tariffs difficulties and monetary stabilisation.

WHAT has happened to these hopes and to these propounded tasks of reconstruction in the outcome of 1933? So far from the Manchurian question being settled, Japan remains in possession, Manchukuo remains unrecognised, Japan has passed out of the League, and the Far Eastern question advances to new and larger issues. The Disarmament Conference has had to break up without result and without date of re-assembly. The Debts question remains unsolved, with the breakdown of the last British-American negotiations in the autumn, and has only been overshadowed by the larger questions of the currency war of the fluctuating pound and dollar. In place of advance to tariffs agreement and monetary stabilisation, the reverse process has taken place, with advance of de-stabilisation and sharpened conflict; the dollar, which had remained stable through all the storms of the war and post-war period, has joined the dance of inflation and uncertainty. The "catastrophe amounting to a world tragedy" which, in the phrase of Roosevelt's Message, would be the significance of a breakdown of the World Economic Conference, took place. And in place of all the projected

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

programme of reconstruction for 1933, new and violent issues have dominated the year, the question of Fascism in Germany, the semi-fascist Roosevelt experiment in the United States, the question of treaty revision in Europe, the collapse of the League, and the advance to re-armament.

AN undoubted advance in certain branches of industrial production was widely acclaimed in the summer of 1933. Between March and July the index of world industrial production (excluding the Soviet Union) advanced 31 per cent., according to the German Institut für Konjunkturforschung, or to the level of the autumn of 1930. On the basis of 1928 as 100, the index for the United States rose from 57.7 for the average of 1932 to 90.1 in July, 1933; for the United Kingdom, from 88.0 to 91.7 (second quarter, 1933); for Germany, from 61.2 to 71.4; for France, from 75.6 to 88.2; for Japan, from 107.9 to 126.9; the world index from 66.1 in 1932, and 65.8 in March, 1933, to 86.4 in July, 1933. The United States Federal Reserve Board Index, on the basis of 1923-5 as 100, measured the advance in the production of manufactured goods from 65 in September, 1932, to 101 in July, 1933. In the light of this upward movement in industrial production, a general acclamation began to be sounded in the summer and autumn of 1933 over the final and the definite beginning of recovery and conquest of the crisis.

THE reality, however, showed a different picture. This advance was not accompanied by any general improvement of the economic situation as a whole. It was not accompanied by any advance of world trade. It was not accompanied by any corresponding advance of consumption. The League of Nations index of the gold value of world trade, on the basis of 1929 as 100, fell from 37 in September, 1932, to 34.3 in June, 1933. The United States, whose stimulus played a great part in the world advance, showed this reality most clearly. In the same period that the Federal Reserve Board measured an advance in manufacturing

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

production from 65 to 101, the corresponding figures of the index for department store sales moved only from 68 to 71, for employment from 60 to 70, and for payrolls from 42 to 50. That is to say, in the same period, between September, 1932, and July, 1933, manufacturing production increased 55 per cent., but the total of wages and salaries increased only 19 per cent. and the index of retail sales increased only 4 per cent. And, indeed, by July alarm was already beginning to be felt :

> The Administration is beginning to exhibit a certain anxiety over the trend of domestic affairs. Statistics and charts prepared for the President by the Federal Reserve Board and the Department of Commerce show clearly that industrial production has leapt ahead during the past three months to an extent which has far outstripped the increase in employment. The President and his advisers fear that if this disparity continues it will ultimately lead to the creation of unmanageable surpluses which will in turn lead to a new collapse of prices."
>
> (Washington correspondent of the *Times*, July 10, 1933.)

There followed the attempts of the "Blanket Code," separate industrial Codes, and manipulated dollar, without ending the disparity. Indeed, the real objective of the government's policy, to raise prices, cut across the supposed propagandist objective, to raise wages and purchasing power, and amounted in fact to a policy to cut real wages, and thus increase the disproportion.

BY the autumn a definite setback and new decline had revealed itself. Between March and July world industrial production (excluding the Soviet Union) had advanced 31 per cent. But between July and September it decreased 8 per cent. ; " the rapid expansion of activity between March and July has since given way to a renewed downward movement " (*Economist*, December 2, 1933). This was most marked in the United States, which had played the leading part in the original stimulus to the advance. The index of manufacturing production fell from 101 in July to 91 in August and 83 in September. The index of department

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

store sales fell from 71 in July to 69 in September. The decline spread more slowly from the United States to Europe. British production remained stationary in the third quarter of 1933, at the same figure as in the summer (Board of Trade index). France began to go downwards. Germany and Japan—the two exceptions are significant—still continued slightly to rise.

WHAT is the meaning of this process that has been developing in 1933? Does it mean the beginning of the solution of the crisis? There is no sign of this. There is so far still increase, rather than decrease, of the world stocks of raw materials. There is no advance of world trade. There is no upward movement of long-term capital investment in industry. Thus there are no signs of the "normal" solution of the old-style capitalist crisis. On the contrary, what has taken place has taken place through artificial emergency measures of direct state intervention and stimulation to industry, through inflation, through the consequent speculative boom which developed in the summer, and through the upward movement of the direct war industries and those connected with them. But all this means that *this apparent upward movement in certain branches of industry in reality reflects the intensification of the crisis.* There is no advance towards a harmonious economic solution. There is only advance towards a violent solution. Characteristic of the situation is that the strongest upward movement is evidenced by Japan, which alone among capitalist countries reaches a level above the pre-crisis level (130 in August, 1933, against 100 in 1928). Next comes the directly state-stimulated and inflation-stimulated upward movement in the United States. Next, though at a lower degree, comes the upward movement in Fascist Germany. All this goes forward with extreme holding down of the workers, robbery through rising prices, suppression of strikes, and semi-military organisation of industry. Towards what market is this state-stimulated increase of production directed, since there is no visible

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

corresponding upward movement of demand? There is no visible market. But the *future* market begins to become more and more clearly visible. *The future market is war.* Towards this all the Roosevelt, Hitler and National Government schemes of intensified dictatorship and organisation and stimulation of industry begin to be more and more visibly directed.

> The rumblings of war are always first heard in the armaments works of Sheffield. We are hearing them to-day clearer than ever since 1918.

In these words "a prominent steel expert" at Sheffield is reported in the press on October 7, 1933, as giving his impression of the situation. The pamphlet of the Union of Democratic Control, "Patriotism Ltd.," gives the following picture of activity in Europe, in summary form:

> GERMANY.—New machine guns, anti-tank guns, regiments equipped with twice the machine-gun armament provided for in the Treaty; secret manufacture of guns and gas.
>
> FRANCE.—Hotchkiss factories pouring out machine-guns for the Far East and South America; Schneider works making munitions, with pickets guarding their thirty feet walls.
>
> BRITAIN.—More men taken on at a British munition works; shifts extended to three a day; 500 girls to work where 50 were sufficient before, many working twelve at a table where in the past there were only two or three. At night lorries leave the factory, sixty at a time, to be unloaded at Southampton.
>
> CZECHO-SLOVAKIA.—Skoda arms factory at Pilsen and State arsenal at Brunn working day and night to execute Far Eastern, South American and South Eastern European orders, as well as home demands.
>
> HOLLAND.—Boom in Dutch munition factories; new workers taken on.
>
> In Great Britain, France, Czecho-Slovakia, Italy, Sweden, Holland, Belgium and Switzerland there has been a big rise in the shares of armament companies.

This picture could be greatly extended in many directions. And this is the "upward movement" which the economic experts blandly present as the beginning of "recovery" from the crisis.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE international political and diplomatic situation corresponds to this process. The previous attempts at collective settlement, the World Economic Conference and the Disarmament Conference, broke down during 1933. The question of the re-division of the world comes openly to the front. Two issues openly dominate, at the beginning of 1934, the tortuous diplomatic exchanges of the Powers, whose secret diplomacy has now avowedly replaced the bankrupt Conferences. The first is the issue of Re-armament. The second is the issue of Revision of the treaties and " Reconstruction " of the League of Nations. Japan's passing out of the League in the spring of 1933, Germany's passing out in the autumn, and Italy's demand at the end of the year for " radical reform " as its " condition " of further membership, are all parts of a single process. The British governmental press gives support, with reservations, to the German-Italian demands, and also emphasises the decrepitude of the League and the necessity of new policies :

> When only two World Powers out of seven remain effective members of the League, how can it claim a vestige of general authority or possess one shred of practical power ? In its present diminished and debilitated form it is absolutely impotent for any active purpose whatever bearing on the main business of peace. (Garvin in the *Observer*, December 10, 1933).

This type of language becomes common and illustrates the general trend to an open war situation.

WHAT is the meaning of the demand for " reconstruction " of the League of Nations from the Fascist states, Italy and Germany ? Does this mean that the League and its supporters represent the system of organised peace, and that the Fascist demand for " reconstruction " represents the demand of warlike aggression to smash the " collective peace system " ? Not at all. Both the League and the anti-League forces are war-systems, but rival war-systems, and therefore in conflict. The League represents the Powers in possession, whose aim is to maintain

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

themselves in possession ; therefore its centre is France and Britain, and the satellite states, the beneficiaries of Versailles ; the League is the war system, framed for war, to maintain their spoils. The Powers outside the League or in opposition to it are the dissatisfied Powers, whose possessions do not yet correspond to their actual or potential strength : Germany, Italy, Japan and also the United States. The demand for " reconstruction " of the League of Nations is the diplomatic form of the demand for the revision of Versailles, and the counterpart of the demand for re-armament.

BUT what is the line of British policy in this situation ? Here we come to the crux of the international position, and one of the most important key driving forces of the future war. The sudden outburst of concerted propaganda from all governmental and high strategic quarters in Britain for the urgent necessity of a rapid large-scale advance in armaments in every field, naval, army and air, has startled opinion. The Conservative Conference in October unanimously carried a resolution which, in the words of the *Times*, " if literally interpreted, enjoins an immediate measure of re-armament by this country." Baldwin declared to this Conference :

> If Britain found herself on some lower rating, and some other country had higher figures, that country must come down, and we must go up, until equality was reached.

The First Sea Lord, Admiral Chatfield, announced in October at the Cutlers' Feast at Sheffield (that is, before the assembled armament makers) :

> The nation must take stock of its defence position and consider whether in its present naval expenditure it is maintaining a naval strength in accordance with its policy.

Earl Beatty underlined this at the Navy League dinner :

> This country must never again bind itself to any such unsafe limit (*i.e.*, the London Naval Treaty), but must as before build the cruisers needed for the exceptional responsibilities we have on the seven seas.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

At the end of November came the Government's announcement of the urgent necessity to increase the Air Force by at least ten squadrons, and build upwards to the level of the strongest existing Air Force. This demand is also actively taken up and echoed and reinforced throughout the press. Did the Government demand ten new squadrons? The press replies: let there be a hundred.

> We require not another hundred machines, but a thousand. We need one hundred squadrons—something more than double our existing strength. That is the new "irreducible minimum."
>
> (*Observer*, December 3, 1933.)

The principal leader of the opposition at the Geneva Conference to all proposals for the abolition of aerial warfare and air-bombing was Britain.

AT the same time Britain has given active support to the German claim for re-arming. This has been the central thread of the Geneva "Disarmament" Conference since its outset at the beginning of 1932, when we had occasion to write that the ultimate significance of the Conference would not be disarming, but re-arming, and in particular the re-arming of Germany. This process, and the British moral and material support for it, has gone forward with great rapidity since the victory of Fascism in Germany. It was within a fortnight of Hitler's "elections" in March and the full Fascist dictatorship that MacDonald and Simon hastened to Geneva to put forward the British Plan for doubling the German army, as a contribution to "disarmament." The inevitability of German re-armament is taken for granted as a simple natural fact in the British press:

> With or without agreement Germany will achieve within a few years—and assuredly sooner than most good persons elsewhere are willing to suppose—not only a concrete equality in arms, but a superiority in some respects over any single neighbour.
>
> (Garvin in the *Observer*, November 19, 1933.)

Baldwin, in the House of Commons on November 27, laid down three alternative outcomes of the Disarmament Conference. First, for all Powers to disarm to the German level.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Second,

> limitation of armaments at a point which excludes all offensive weapons. . . . In that event you have the heavily armed nations disarming to that point, and you have Germany re-arming to that point.

Third, " competition in armaments." Only the third is, in his view, excluded : " in no circumstances must that third alternative be reached." The indication was clearly that the second is in practice intended : *i.e.*, the rearming of Germany ; and this would in that case certainly be the total outcome of " disarmament," since the supposed parallel " disarming to that point " of the " heavily armed nations " would in practice be so hedged round with reservations and time-clauses as to remain on paper. To such an outcome the present negotiations of Britain, France and Germany are endeavouring to prepare the ground. At the same time British armament firms are pouring armaments into Germany. One third of the world export of arms, according to the official League of Nations statistics, comes from Britain.

WHAT, then, is the British aim ? Why this frenzied course to re-armament ? Why this indefatigable pressing forward of the re-armament of Germany, the former rival and antagonist ? Why this anxiety to grant to Fascist Germany what was refused to " democratic " Germany ? Against whom ? Against France ? Most certainly not. For there is at the same time the most manifest eagerness to maintain the closest relations with France, and not only that, but to press forward by every means Franco-German agreement—an aim to which German Fascism, despite all its demagogic anti-French propaganda which it utilised in the rise to power shows considerable readiness to respond. Against the United States ? The contradictions are certainly growing ; but these do not occupy the centre of the picture at present ; they are a slower, deeper growth ; and, barring accidents, there is no readiness, yet, on either side for immediate conflict. Against whom, then ? *For*

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Re-armament" is no game of toy soldiers. "Re-armament" is no game of juridical formulas on paper. "Re-armament" is for a purpose.

BRITISH policy as always in the most critical moments of the preparation of the combinations for future war, endeavours to wrap up its operations in a veil of ambiguity and obscurity. Similarly before 1914, up to the very moment of the declaration of war, there remained apparent uncertainty and hesitation of the impartial, undecided, would-be conciliatory onlooker, with a complete obscurity as to the exact degree of obligations to the Entente—an obscurity which served to deceive, not only the House of Commons and the majority of the members of the Cabinet, but also the German Government. "Up to the very outbreak of war" said the original Manifesto of the First Congress of the Communist International in 1919 "British diplomacy stood by with vizor down in mysterious secrecy. The Government of the City took care to conceal its intention to enter the war on the side of the Entente in order not to frighten off the Berlin Government from going to war. For London wanted war; hence their action to make Berlin and Vienna build their hopes on English neutrality, while Paris and Petrograd were sure of England's intervention." The whole purpose of the policy of "encirclement" would have been defeated, had it been made plain and open beforehand that an immeasurably superior network of war alliances had been built up around the intended victim until the actual moment of war became the moment for laying the cards on the table.

DESPITE the basic dissimilarities in the general situation there is a certain analogy in the technique of British diplomacy in the whole post-war period. Once again (after the first direct attack of the wars of intervention had failed) there is a long, patient and laborious pursuit of a policy of "encirclement" to build up a superior alliance against the consciously seen main enemy—against

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the Soviet Union. Through the League of Nations, through Locarno, through the Four Power Pact, through the wooing of Germany; in the Border states; in the Near and Middle East; in relation to Japan; on all the fronts the attempt goes forward. And just as in the earlier period the Rapallo and Berlin Treaties, so to-day the journeyings of Litvinov, the non-aggression treaties, the closer relations with France, with Turkey, with Italy, and with the United States represent the repeated triumphant breaking of the net by Soviet diplomacy. The contest goes ceaselessly forward. But the victory of Fascism in Germany, and aggressive preparations of Japan in the Far East, bring this issue to-day to a new intensity. And just as in the pre-1914 period the real aim of diplomacy, the consciousness of the main enemy, was most sharply and directly expressed in the so-called "popular" press, in the *Daily Mail* with its ceaseless anti-German campaigns, in the technical military press, &c., while the language of diplomacy on top remained ambiguous and veiled, and seemingly concerned with every issue save the main objective, so to-day the same picture reveals itself in the anti-Soviet campaign.

THE foreign policy of the National Government is attacked by its critics for weakness, uncertainty, vacillation. At one moment Simon is accused of too great conciliation to Germany, at another of too great subservience to France. At one moment the National Government courts Germany and offends France. At another moment the National Government courts France and offends Germany. Divisions of opinion are widely expressed in bourgeois quarters as to the policy to be followed. These divisions are reflected in parliament, and are even reported as reflected in the Cabinet. In extreme forms, press campaigns are conducted, on the one side for a complete British-French military alliance, on the other side for the repudiation of Locarno and a policy of isolation. Thus the picture appears a picture of considerable uncertainty and confusion. Yet a closer examination will show that these varying strands represent in reality varying aspects of a basic identity of policy.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

EVER since Versailles, British policy has, in fact, pursued very clearly marked and consistent aims, despite the fluctuations necessitated through changing circumstances. First, while maintaining the essential basis of Versailles, the alliance with France, and the League, to weaken French predominance by assisting German restoration to power and by close relations with Italy. Second, to draw Germany from the Eastern to the Western orientation. Third, on this basis to build the bloc of Western Imperialism under British hegemony. Fourth, to co-operate with Japan outside Europe. Fifth, on this basis, to build the bloc against the Soviet Union and against the United States. Sixth, to direct the main aim against the Soviet Union as the immediate principal enemy, and to delay so far as possible the inevitable conflict with the United States.

THE past decade and a half has seen the continuous development of this policy through all the vicissitudes of post-war diplomacy. It was manifest that the signing of the Locarno Treaties in 1925 marked at the time a big stage of advance in this policy, towards the restoration of Germany in principle as an equal Power, the drawing of Germany under Stresemann from an Eastern to a Western orientation, the guaranteeing of peace on the Western frontiers, and thus the building of the bloc of Western Imperialism against Communism. This objective was clearly stated at the time. The famous indiscretion of the Government Minister, Ormsby-Gore, may be recalled, who gave an "explanation" of Locarno as "the solidarity of Christian civilisation to stem the most sinister growth that has arisen in European history," and went on:

> The struggle at Locarno, as I see it, was this: Is Germany to regard her future as bound up with the fate of the great Western Powers, or is she going to work with Russia for the destruction of Western civilisation? . . . Locarno means that so far as the present government of Germany is concerned, it is detached from Russia and throwing in its lot with the Western Party.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NEVERTHELESS, Locarno failed in the full realisation of its object, although marking an important stage forward. For Germany still followed the two-sided or "re-insurance" policy, and followed up Locarno with the Berlin Soviet-German Treaty, renewing Rapallo, in 1926. Britain at the time was tied up with the General Strike. When the General Strike had been successfully settled, and Britain struck its blow against the Soviet Union in the beginning of 1927, it found itself isolated. Birkenhead's journey to Berlin for support met with no response. The Chinese Revolution concentrated British attention. At the same time, from 1927 onwards (Geneva Naval Conference breakdown) Anglo-American antagonism came sharply to the front. And in 1929 came the world economic crisis. The whole policy was delayed. Japanese aggression in the Far East brought again strong preparations for attack in the spring of 1932. But the opposition of the United States, the internal economic difficulties of Britain, the Empire difficulties of Ottawa, and the Lausanne and debts complications, as well as the uncertain inner situation and rapid growth of the forces of the proletarian revolution in Germany, hindered the advance and held over the issue.

IT is the victory of Fascism in Germany in 1933 *that has brought to the front again the whole world counter-revolutionary offensive under British leadership.* Here at last was the hope of smashing one of the principal obstacles in the path, the German revolutionary working-class movement, and securing in German Fascism an obedient tool, provided it could be turned from its anti-Western threats and concentrated on the line of aggression in the East. The British Government hastened immediately to the support of German Fascism. MacDonald proceeded to Geneva in March to proclaim to the world that "Either Germany is given justice and freedom, or Europe will risk destruction," and to put forward the British Plan for doubling the German Army. Thence he passed on to Rome, and with Mussolini evolved the Four Power Pact,

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

or most direct expression of the bloc of Western Imperialism for a single policy " in all questions, political and non-political, European and extra-European." " These were the four Powers," explained MacDonald to the press on March 21, " which, if the worst were to come, would have to bear the brunt of the work." In April followed the British rupture of trade relations with the Soviet Union. Within twenty-four hours of the British rupture followed the Japanese ultimatum to the Soviet Union over the Chinese Eastern Railway.

BUT a series of complications still arise in the path. The military concessions to Germany arouse the suspicions of France, which sees plainly the menace to Versailles and the close approach of Revision, and views with extreme distrust the Four Power Pact. France accordingly countered the British moves by closer relations with the Soviet Union. In May (that is, at the same time as the British breach of trade relations) the French Foreign Minister spoke enthusiastically of the " renewal of French-Soviet friendship. . . . Without its being a revival of the former French-Russian alliance, it rendered a new service to the cause of peace . . . a great nation which would play its part in the world " &c. (*Times*, May 5, 1933), while the semi-governmental press of the left broke into flowery nonsense about " the two great democratic republics in Europe " in opposition to Fascism. At the same time Germany on its side signed the renewal of the Berlin German-Soviet Treaty. Thus the Four Power front was for the moment successfully broken by Soviet diplomacy, which proceeded to add the ring of non-aggression pacts with the border states, finally completed at the World Economic Conference. In this way the British attack was again isolated, and Britain was compelled to end the formal rupture in July at the World Economic Conference, though still delaying up to the present the renewal of a trade treaty. In September took place the visit of Herriot and of the Air Minister, Cot, to the Soviet Union.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ALONGSIDE of this, Anglo-American relations seriously worsened in 1933. The fiasco of the MacDonald-Roosevelt meeting in April was accompanied by the opening of the currency war of the pound and dollar. Britain sought for a stabilisation agreement at the World Economic Conference without success. After suffering the offenisve of sterling depreciation for eighteen months, the United States, having now taken up the same weapon, was not going to relinquish its weapon so rapidly, more especially as a measure of inflation was important for its internal policy. The series of Roosevelt messages vetoed each successive provisional agreement, and the World Economic Conference ended in the most resounding fiasco of all post-war conferences. The subsequent debt negotiations in the autumn also ended in failure. In the face of the sharpening Anglo-American antagonism, and more especially in face of the Japanese aggression in the Far East, the United States also proceeded for the first time since the October Revolution to build up relations with the Soviet Union. The American approach for the resumption of relations was addressed to the Soviet Union in October, and led to recognition in November. This was a significant transformation in international relations, although the calculations of American Imperialism, both economic and political, were transparently obvious.

IN this situation British policy was compelled to manœuvre, and to draw closer once again to France. The MacDonald "Disarmament" (Re-armament) Plan of March was modified in a series of particulars, to meet French objections, and at the expense of Germany. But this immediately aroused German antagonism; Germany demonstratively quitted the League of Nations and the Disarmament Conference in October; and the German press, which had previously spoken of Britain as the friend and ally, now poured out its anger against British "desertion," and found comfort only in Lloyd George, who continued to repeat the permanent basic British policy of the restoration of Germany in opposition to French hegemony.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BRITISH diplomacy was now faced with its most delicate task: to endeavour to draw France and Germany together in a single line, despite all the antagonisms. The whole of British efforts were exerted to secure direct French-German negotiations for an understanding. Despite the direct blow in the face represented by the German abandonment of the League, British expression continued conciliatory in the extreme to Fascist Germany. MacDonald, at the Lord Mayor's Banquet, was anxious to explain that "the German case is sympathetically understood," that any German proposals would have "most favourable and impartial consideration at our hands," that "it was the British Government which got the five Powers to declare in favour of equality," &c. Simon, in the House of Commons on November 24, applauded the "very remarkable interview" of Hitler to de Brinon, proposing permanent Franco-German peace on a basis of recognition of the frontiers in the West, and proclaimed the readiness to regard Germany as "a partner." In December the French-German conversations went forward in a veil of secret diplomacy. Italy put in its demand for the "radical reform" of the League of Nations in the direction represented by the Four Power Pact. British diplomacy is obviously hopeful anew of the building of the bloc of Western Imperialism. The British chauvinist press (Rothermere) and the German official press (Rosenberg) equally express the basic aim of peace in the West and expansion in the East, *i.e.*, against the Soviet Union, even publishing in detail their proposals for the division of the lion's skin.

AT the same time, Japanese aggression and expansion in the Far East receives no less striking "sympathetic understanding" from British expression, despite the acute difficulties of extreme commercial competition at the present point (in 1933 Japanese cotton goods exports have for the first time outstripped British). The *Times* (December 8, 1933) publishes a sympathetic article on "Crowded Japan." "In the next ten years Japan must find work and food for

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nearly ten millions more people than she employs and feeds to-day." The alternatives are seen as either social revolution or aggressive foreign expansion :

> The cheap goods of the factories into which the surplus workers of the farms were drained have found markets abroad. If the process does not continue, how is Japan to avoid an explosion which will either destroy the social order at home or burst a way to expansion abroad ?

The writer concludes that Japan cannot reasonably be expected to refrain from foreign aggression :

> A poor proud heavily-armed nation can hardly be expected, as a Japanese writer has said, to " starve in saintly submission in its own back-yard."

At the same time German-Japanese relations are drawn close, with exchanges of missions, German military aid to Japan, &c.

THE dream of British Imperialism and of the imperialist counter-revolution throughout the world for 1934 is manifest. The impossibility of the peaceful solution of the world economic crisis carries forward ever faster the advance to world war. The forces of development towards fascism press forward in every capitalist country. In the United States the Roosevelt policy reveals more and more its militarist, anti-striking, lynching character. In Britain the Unemployment Bill expresses the advance to new forms of intensified dictatorship. In Spain the combined bourgeois reaction uses every means to strangle the revolution. In Germany the violence of Fascism grows with the growth of discontent and of the working-class opposition. The forces of counter-revolution throughout the world dream to solve the world crisis and turn the future world war into the channel of war against the Soviet Union, by the direct attack of Japan in the East, with the support of Germany and Western Imperialism from the West. Against the sharp menace of such a war we have to be prepared. The strength of the working class front against fascism and against imperialist

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

war in every country is decisive for the future line of development. The culminating stages of the world economic crisis, and of the increasingly reckless policies of capitalism, drive to a violent outcome. The fight of the international working class against fascism and against imperialist war is faced with big issues in the coming year, and with high revolutionary possibilities.

R. P. D.

LENIN ON BRITAIN

A NEW AND VALUABLE COLLECTION WILL BE PUBLISHED IN JANUARY

8/6

WAR for the LAND in IRELAND

BRIAN O'NEILL :: A piece of Marxist research, fully documented, popularly written

5/-

BRIEF HISTORY OF RUSSIA

N. M. POKROVSKY Trans. D. S. MIRSKY

2 vols. **15/-**

"... the best outline history of Russia, but is also a model of how a history of this scope should be written." R. PAGE ARNOT, *Daily Worker.*

CONDITION of the WORKING CLASS in BRITAIN

ALLEN HUTT. Intro. by H. POLLITT. **6/-**

Marxist Study Courses: Economics I-II (incl. 10a) **6d.** each

COMING: **R. P. DUTT on FASCISM**

Martin Lawrence, 33 Gt. James St., London

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LENIN

By J. STALIN

(*A Speech delivered at the Military School in the Kremlin on the 18th of January, 1924*)

COMRADES! I was told that you were holding here an evening of recollections in honour of Lenin, and I was invited to be one of the speakers. I do not think it is necessary for me to give a connected report on Lenin's work, and I would prefer to limit myself to giving a number of facts which illustrate some of Lenin's special qualities which show us what he was as a man and a statesman. These facts, perhaps, will not be bound together with any inner link, but nevertheless that will not be an obstacle to obtaining through them a general picture of Lenin. However that may be, at this moment I am not in a position to give you more than I have promised.

The Eagle

I got to know Lenin in the year 1903. To be sure, this acquaintance was not a personal one, but one made through the medium of letters. But this acquaintance made an unforgettable impression on me, which has never left me during the whole of my party activity. I was at that time in exile in Siberia. The knowledge of Lenin's revolutionary activity at the end of the 90's and especially after 1901, after the publication of *Iskra* (The Spark) convinced me that we had to do with a quite extraordinary man. At that time I saw in him not the simple leader of our Party, but its actual founder, for he alone understood the inner essence and needs of our Party. If I compared him with the other leaders of our party, it always seemed to me as if the other co-workers of Lenin—Plekhanov, Martov, Axelrod among others—stood at least a head beneath him, as if he, compared with them was not simply one of the leaders, but a leader of a higher type, an eagle, for whom fear is a stranger, and who would courageously lead the party forward on the unknown path of the Russian revolutionary movement. This impression sank so deeply into my soul that I felt the need to write to a close friend about it, who was also in exile, in order to hear his opinion. After a time I was living then in exile in Siberia, it would be just about the end of 1903—I received my friend's enthusiastic answer and a simple but heartfelt letter from Lenin, to whom my friend had given my letter to read. Lenin's letter was comparatively short but it gave a daring, fearless criticism of the practice of our party and an amazingly clear and compact statement of the whole plan of work for the coming period. Only Lenin was able to write about the most complicated things so simply

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and clearly, so compactly and daringly so that each sentence not only spoke to the reader but also hit the mark. This simple letter strengthened my conviction that in the person of Lenin we had the eagle of our party. Unfortunately, due to the habit of old conspirators, I have given this letter to the flames, as so many others.

My acquaintance with Lenin dates from that time on.

Modesty

In December, 1905, I met Lenin for the first time at the Conference of the Bolsheviks in Tammerfors (Finland). I had expected to find the proud eagle of our party a great man, great not only as a politician but also in outward appearance; for in my imagination Lenin appeared to me as a giant and a marvel. How disappointed I was, when I saw a perfectly ordinary man, of middle size, who differed outwardly in nothing, literally nothing, from other ordinary mortals. . . .

It is usual for " great men " to be unpunctual as a rule, so that the audience await their appearance with beating hearts, and at the entry of the great man give vent to their feelings through " H'sh ! H'sh ! Be quiet ! He is coming ! " This proceeding did not seem to me altogether superfluous, for it impressed and brought out respect. How disappointed I was once again, when I saw that Lenin was there before the other delegates and was having an ordinary conversation with the simple delegates to the conference in some corner of the room. I must confess that at that time this seemed to me to be a certain infringement of necessary rules.

Only later did I understand that this simplicity and modesty, this effort to remain unnoticed or in any case not to press forward and not to stress his higher position was one of the strongest sides of Lenin, a peculiar characteristic of the new leader of new masses, of the simple, ordinary masses of the lowest " depths."

The strength of his logic

Both the speeches which Lenin made at this Conference, the one on the general situation and the one on the agrarian question, were very remarkable. Unfortunately they were not taken down and kept. They were burning words which roused the whole meeting to stormy enthusiasm. The unusual power of conviction, the simplicity and clarity of the argument, the short sentences, understandable for all, the lack of artistic, rhetorical pictures, waving gestures and phrases striving after effect—in all these things Lenin's speeches differed favourable from the speeches of the other " parliamentary " speakers.

But at that time it was not this side of Lenin's speeches which enchained me, it was the powerful force of the logic in his speeches which

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

took me prisoner—which is certainly somewhat dry, but compelling, which grips the audience, gradually electrifies them in order at the close to capture them completely. I remember how at that time many delegates said: "The logic in Lenin's speeches is rather in the nature of mighty tentacles, which seize you from all sides like tongs, from whose grip you cannot tear yourself loose; either you yield or you are destroyed."

I think that this peculiarity in the speeches of Lenin was the strongest side of his oratorical ability.

Undismayed

The second time that I met Lenin was at the Party Congress in Stockholm in the year 1906. It is well known that the Bolsheviks at that time were in the minority and suffered a defeat. I saw Lenin then for the first time in the rôle of the vanquished. Not in the slightest degree did he resemble those leaders who despair after a defeat. On the contrary, this defeat raised Lenin's energy, so that his supporters were enthused to new struggles and future victories. I spoke of the defeat of Lenin. But was it really a defeat? The victors of the Stockholm Party Congress—Plekhanov, Martov, Axelrod, &c.—had little resemblance to real victors, for Lenin, in his ruthless criticism of Menshevism, had not left them a leg to stand on. I remember how we, the Bolshevik delegates, gathered in a bunch, looked at Lenin and awaited his advice. In the speeches of some of the delegates there sounded an undertone of weariness and despair. I remember how Lenin, in answer to such speeches, thrust forward with clenched teeth: "Not dismayed, Comrades! Victory is certain, for we are in the right." Hate for the dismay of the intelligentsia, belief in our own forces and in victory—about this Lenin spoke to us after the defeat. One felt that this check was only a passing one and that the Bolsheviks in the very near future must win.

"After defeat, no dismay"—this peculiarity of Lenin made it possible for him to gather around him an army, believing in its power and devoted to the end.

Soberness

The next Party Congress in London in 1907 saw the Bolsheviks the victors. Usually victory goes to the heads of the leaders, makes them stuck up and intoxicates them. But it did not affect Lenin in this way to the slightest degree. On the contrary, precisely after a victory he was particularly careful and searching. I remember how Lenin, at that time, impressed emphatically upon the delegates: "Our first task is not to become intoxicated with success, our second is to hold fast to the victory and to build up, and the third—to destroy the enemy, for he is only beaten and not smashed." He ridiculed those delegates who credulously

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

said that " the Mensheviks from now on are played out." It was not difficult for him to prove that they were still rooted firmly in the working-class movement, that one must fight them cleverly, that one should not over-estimate one's own forces and, above all, not under-estimate the forces of the enemy.

" Not to get intoxicated with victory "—that is the special characteristic in Lenin's character thanks to which he was able to estimate soberly the forces of the enemy and to guard the party from surprise.

Holding fast to principle

A Party leader must reckon with the outlook of the majority of his party. This Lenin understood no less well than any other leader ; but Lenin was never the prisoner of the majority and particularly not when this majority had not a basis in principle. There were moments in the history of our party where the opinion of the majority or the interests of the hour came into conflict with the interests in principle of the proletariat. In such cases Lenin, without having to deliberate much, came out decisively on the side of the decision-in-principle and against the majority of the party. Moreover in these cases he did not shrink from standing alone against all, since he—and he often emphasised it—held the point of view that " the policy of principle is the best policy."

Two facts are particularly characteristic in this connection :

The period from 1909 *to* 1911. The Party, smashed up by the counter-revolution was in complete disintegration. That was the period of disbelief in the Party, the period of the flight of not only the intellectuals, but also of a part of the workers out of the ranks of the party, the period of liquidationism, of the negation of illegality, of disruption. Not only the Mensheviks but also the Bolsheviks had numerous fractions and tendencies in their ranks, which for the most part were torn away from the workers' movement. It is well known that precisely in this period the idea emerged of liquidating completely illegal activity and organising the workers in a legal, liberal Stolypin party. Lenin, at that time, was the only one who did not give way to panic, held high the banner of the party, gathered together the divided and defeated forces of the party with the most amazing patience, and with unwonted obstinacy, fighting against all liquidating tendencies inside the workers' movement, defended the Party with a rare courage and with unbelievable persistence.

It is well known that Lenin came victorious out of this dispute.

The period from 1914 to 1917. The period of the imperialist world war, when almost all social democratic and socialist parties under the general patriotic hypnotism became lackeys of the imperialism of the fatherland. That was the period when the Second International ran

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

down their flag before capital, where even men such as Plekhanov, Kautsky, Guesde, &c., did not stand up to the wave of chauvinism. Lenin at that time was the only one, or almost the only one who began the only decisive fight against the social-chauvinists and the social-pacifists, who exposed the treachery of Kautsky and Guesde and damned the half-heartedness of the pseudo-revolutionaries. Lenin knew that he had behind him only an insignificant minority, but he also knew that the only correct policy, which belonged to the future, is the policy of consistent internationalism, because " policy of principle is the only correct policy."

It is well known that in this fight for the new international Lenin emerged as victor.

" The policy of principle is the only correct policy "—that is the formula with which Lenin took the most " impregnable " positions by storm and won the best elements of the proletariat for revolutionary Marxism.

Trust in the masses

The theoreticians and party leaders who have thoroughly studied the history of nations and the history or revolutions from A to Z, often suffer from a peculiar disease. This disease is called fear of the masses, mistrust in the creative ability of the mass. On this soil there often grows a certain aristocratic attitude of the leaders towards the masses, who are not skilled in the history of revolutions but who are called upon to destroy the old and to set up the new in its place. The fear that the elementary force of the masses can overflow, that they could " destroy too much," the desire to play the rôle of the schoomaster who is eager to teach the masses his own book learning, but to learn nothing from them himself—that is the soil on which this kind of aristocracy thrives.

Lenin was the opposite of such leaders, I do not know any other revolutionary who trusted so strongly as Lenin in the creative forces of the proletariat and in the revolutionary purposefulness of its class instinct. I know of no other who understood as Lenin did how to polish off with such caustic scorn the self-satisfied critics of the " chaos of the revolution " and the " orgies of the unchained masses." I remember how Lenin, in a conversation on the remarks of a comrade that " after the revolution normal order would have to be introduced," answered sarcastically " It is sad when people who want to be revolutionaries forget that the most normal order in history is the order of revolution."

Therefore Lenin distrusted all those who looked down from above on the masses and on the basis of their book learning wanted to teach them. Therefore Lenin's constant demand to learn from the masses, to think into their behaviour, and to study most exactly the practical experience of the fight of the masses.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The strong trust in the creative forces of the masses is the particular thing in the activity of Lenin which made it possible for him to let the elementary outbreaks of the masses ripen to great thoughts and to lead them into the fairway of the proletarian revolution.

The genius of the Revolution

Lenin was born for the revolution. He was the true genius of revolutionary struggle and the greatest master of revolutionary leadership. He never felt so free and joyous as in the epoch of revolutionary upheavals. By this I do not mean to say that Lenin approved equally of every revolutionary upheaval, or that he was under all conditions in favour of revolutionary eruptions. I only want to say that that penetration of genius never came to light so clearly and openly as in the time of revolutionary movement. In the days of revolutionary overthrow he literally blossomed out, he became clear-sighted, he divined the movement of the classes and the probable zig-zags of the revolution as if they were plotted on a map in front of him. Not for nothing was it said in our party circles: "Ilyich knows how to swim in the waves of the revolution as a fish in water."

This explains the "overwhelming" *clarity* of the tactical slogans and the "amazing" *daring* of the revolutionary plans of Lenin. I remember two particularly characteristic facts which underline this peculiarity of Lenin's.

The first fact: the period before the October overthrow, when millions of peasants, workers and soldiers distracted by the crisis within the country and at the front, shouting for peace and freedom: when the bourgeoisie were preparing the military dictatorship in the interest of a "war to a victorious end"; when so-called public opinion and the so-called socialist parties were against the Bolsheviks and insulted them as German spies; when Kerenski wanted to force our party into illegality and to a certain extent had already forced it; when the still powerful disciplined army of the German-Austrian coalition stood against our weary and demoralised regiments and when the west "European Socialists" supported their governments in the interest of a "war to a victorious end." . . .

What did it mean at such a moment to raise the banner of rebellion? Under such circumstances to call for rebellion meant: to stake everything on a single throw. But Lenin did not shrink from the stakes, for he knew, he saw with his piercing mind that the uprising was inevitable and the victory certain, that the uprising in Russia meant the end of the imperialist war, that this uprising in Russia would revive the tormented masses of Western Europe and turn the imperialist war into a civil war,

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

create the Soviet Republic and that this Soviet Republic would be the bulwark of the revolutionary movement of the whole world.

It is well known that this revolutionary vision of Lenin was fulfilled with the greatest exactitude in the result.

The second fact : During the first days after the October revolution, when the Council of People's Commissars was endeavouring to induce the rebellious Generals and the Commander-in-Chief Duchonin to stop war operations and to open armistice negotiations with the Germans, I remember how Lenin, Krylenko (the next Commander-in-Chief) and I went to the General Staff in Petersburg in order to speak on the telephone to Duchonin. It was a most critical moment. Duchonin and Headquarters categorically refused to carry out the order of the Council of People's Commissars. As far as the soldiers were concerned it was uncertain how it stood with the twelve million army which was subjected to the influence of the so-called army organisations, which were against the Soviet power. In Petersburg itself, at that time as is well known, an uprising of the Junkers was maturing. Further, Kerenski was marching against Petersburg with the troops attached to him. I remember, how, after a short pause at the telephone, how suddenly an unusual bright gleam flitted across Comrade Lenin's face. One saw that he had already taken a firm resolve. " Let us go to the wireless station," said Lenin, " it will help us : we will remove General Duchonin by special order, and put Comrade Krylenko in his place as Commander-in-Chief, and over the heads of Headquarters and the army commanders turn direct to the soldiers with the demand : seize the Generals, stop war operations, get into touch with the Austrian and German soldiers and make the cause of peace their own cause."

That was a leap into the unknown. But Lenin did not fear this " leap " ; for he knew that the army wanted peace and would fight for it against all obstacles which stood in the way of achieving this aim ; and he knew also that this kind of introduction into peace negotiations would not be without effect on the Austrian and German soldiers and that that meant demands for peace would break out on all fronts.

It is well known that this revolutionary vision of Lenin's was also fulfilled up to the last jot.

A wide-ranging vision of genius, an ability to grasp, to recognise the inner meaning of the events which were germinating—that is the characteristic of Lenin which made it possible for him to lay down the right strategic line for the revolutionary movement.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FEATURES OF THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

By N. LENIN

[*The following extract from a Preface to the Correspondence of Marx, Engels, Sorge and others contained in Lenin's Collected Works, Vol. XI., is published by the courtesy of Messrs. Martin Lawrence and Co. It is included in a collection of Lenin's writings shortly to be published by them under the title of* LENIN ON BRITAIN. (*See advertisement, p. 24*)].

MARX and Engels most often in their correspondence dealt with the topical questions affecting the labour movements in England, America and Germany. This is understandable, because they were Germans who lived in England and corresponded with their comrades in America. . . .

It is very instructive to compare what Marx and Engels said concerning questions affecting the English, American and German labour movements. If we bear in mind that Germany, on the one hand, and England and America on the other, represent different stages of capitalist development, different forms of bourgeois class rule, and that political life differs entirely in these countries, then this comparison will acquire special significance. From the scientific point of view, we observe here an example of materialist dialectics, an ability to bring to the forefront and emphasise different points, different aspects of the question as applied to the concrete features of the respective political and economic conditions. From the point of view of the practical politics and tactics of the workers' party, they give us an example of how the creators of the *Communist Manifesto* defined the tasks of the fighting proletariat in accordance with the different stages of the labour movements in the various countries.

In regard to Anglo-American socialism, Marx and Engels most sharply criticised its isolation from the labour movement. Through their numerous comments on the Social-Democratic Federation in England and on the American Socialists, there runs like a thread the accusation that they transformed Marxism into a dogma, into a " petrified (*Starre*) orthodoxy," that they regard it as a " symbol of faith " and not as a *guide to action*, that they are not able to envisage the theoretically helpless but vital mass, powerful labour movement that is marching side by side with them. " Where would we be now," exclaims Engels in his letter of January 27, 1887, " if we in the period 1864 to 1873 had always wanted to go hand in hand only with those who openly proclaimed themselves

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to be adherents of our programme ? " and in a preceding letter (December 28, 1886), dealing with Henry George's influence on the working class in America, he writes: " One or two million workers' votes cast in November for a *bona fide* workers' party would be infinitely more important at the present time than a hundred thousand votes cast for a theoretically irreproachable programme."

These are very interesting passages. Social-Democrats have been found among us who are hastening to utilise these passages in defence of the idea of convening a " workers' congress " or something like Larin's " Broad Labour Party." Why not in defence of a " left-*bloc* " ?—We would ask these precocious " utilisers " of Engels. The letter from which these passages are quoted was written at a time when the workers in America voted for Henry George. Madame Wishnevetzky, an American lady who married a Russian, and who is a translator of the works of Engels, asked the latter, as is evident from his reply to her, to give Henry George a good drubbing. Engels writes (December 28, 1886) that *the time had not come for that ;* far better let the workers' party begin to be formed on a programme not altogether pure. Later on the workers themselves will understand and " will learn from their mistakes " ; but " I think it would be a great mistake to hinder the national organisation of the workers' party, no matter on what programme."

Of course, Engels perfectly well understood the absurdity and *reactionary character* of Henry George's ideas from the point of view of socialism, and he referred to this many times. In Marx's correspondence with Sorge there are some very interesting letters in which Marx appraises Henry George as the ideologist of the *radical bourgeoisie.* " Theoretically, Henry George is quite backward—(*total arriére*) " writes Marx. But Frederick Engels was not afraid to go to the ballot box with this *socialist reactionary* so long as there were people capable of telling the masses " the consequences of their own mistakes." (Engels : Letter dated November 29, 1886.) . . . .

It is more interesting, of course, for us to deal . . . with the *main* features of the Anglo-American movement. These features are : the absence of any important national, *democratic* tasks confronting the proletariat, the complete subordination of the proletariat to bourgeois politics, the sectarian isolation of groups and handfuls of Socialists from the proletariat, the absence of the slightest socialist successes among the masses of the workers during elections, &c. . . .

Engels insisted so much upon the economic organisation of the workers under such conditions, because he was dealing with the most fully established democratic systems, which confront the proletariat with purely socialist tasks.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Engels insisted on the importance of an independent workers' party even with a bad programme, because he was dealing with countries where, up till now, there has not been even a hint of the political independence of the workers—where the workers mostly follow, and still follow, the politics of the bourgeoisie. . . .

The year 1893. The settling of accounts with the Fabians, which simply asks to be used as a criterion to judge the Bernsteinians (it was not for nothing that Bernstein "trained" his opportunism in England on the "Fabians"). "The Fabians here in London represent a gang of careerists who have sufficient common-sense however, to realise the inevitability of the social revolution . . . but not trusting this gigantic task to the crude proletariat alone, they are gracious enough to stand at the head of it. Their fundamental principle is fear of revolution. They are "intellectuals" par excellence. Their socialism is municipal socialism; the municipality and not the nation should, at first, at any rate, take over the means of production. They depict their socialism as an extreme but inevitable consequence of bourgeois liberalism. Hence their tactics: not to wage determined struggle against the Liberals as opponents, but push them towards a socialist conclusion, *i.e.*, to hoodwink them, to permeate liberalism with socialism, not to put up Socialist candidates against the Liberals, but to foist them on the Liberals, *i.e.*, to get them elected by deception. . . . But of course they fail to understand that in doing so they will either deceive themselves or deceive socialism.

"Besides a lot of rubbish, the Fabians have published several good works of a propagandist nature, and it is the best that Englishmen have done in this sphere. But as soon as they revert to their specific tactics: to gloss over the class struggle, then things go badly. Because of the class struggle, they fanatically hate Marx and all of us.

"The Fabians, of course, have many bourgeois adherents and that is why they have 'lots of money'. . . ."

. . . We see clearly depicted before us two lines of Engels' (and Marx's) counsels, comments, corrections, threats and instruction. They most insistently call upon the Anglo-American Socialists to merge with the labour movement and to eradicate from their organisations the narrow and conservative sectarian spirit. But they persistently taught the German Social-Democrats to have no mercy on philistinism, "parliamentary idiotism" (an expression Marx used in his letter of September 19, 1897) and the petty-bourgeois opportunism of the intellectuals.

Is it not characteristic that our Social-Democratic countrymen should raise a clamour about the counsels of the first order and shut their mouths and ignore the counsels of the second order? Is not this one-sidedness

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in the appreciation of the letters of Marx and Engels the best indication of the " one-sidedness " of Russian Social-Democracy ?

At the present time, when the international labour movement is betraying symptoms of profound ferment and wavering, when the extremes of opportunism, " parliamentary idiotism " and philistine reformism have called forth the opposite extreme of revolutionary syndicalism—at the present time, the general line of Marx's and Engels' " correction " of Anglo-American and German socialism assumes exceptional importance.

In those countries where there was no Social-Democratic workers' party, no Social-Democratic deputies in Parliament, no systematic and consistent Social-Democratic policy at election, in the press, &c.—in such countries, Marx and Engels taught the Socialists to throw off their narrow sectarianism *at all costs* and *affiliate* to the labour movement in order *politically to shake up* the proletariat. For both in England and in America the proletariat in the latter part of the nineteenth century displayed *hardly any* political independence. The political arena in those countries—was *entirely* filled with the triumphant and smug bourgeoisie, which has no equal in the art of deceiving, corrupting and bribing the workers. . . .

In 1889 the movement of the unskilled workers (dockers, gas workers, &c.), a young, fresh movement imbued with a revolutionary spirit, commenced in England. Engels was full of admiration for it. He enthusiastically emphasised the part played in this movement by " Tussy," Marx's daughter, who conducted agitation among them. " The most repulsive thing here," he writes from London, on December 7, 1889, " is the bourgeois ' respectability ' which has become part of the flesh and blood of the workers. The social dismemberment of society into innumerable gradations, unquestionably accepted by all, each of which has its own separate ' ambition ' and is imbued with the inborn feeling of respect for their ' betters ' and ' superiors,' is so old and firm, that it is not a difficult thing to deceive the masses for the benefit of the bourgeoisie. . . ."

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE MEANING OF THE NEW UNEMPLOYMENT BILL

By WAL HANNINGTON

THE National Government's New Unemployment Bill is a tremendous attack, not only upon the whole unemployed, but upon the whole working class in general. It is a slavery Bill; a blow at Trade Unions; harsher Means Test; a starvation Bill for children; a robbery of the democratic rights of the workers; a robbery of insured working men and women's contributions; an anti-strike Bill, and a Bill to limit the rights of the National Unemployed Workers' Movement. No longer will there be even any pretence of democracy, or democratic rights under this Bill. Able-bodied unemployed outside the limited Insurance Scheme, will be put under the control of hard-faced dictators in Whitehall, and the first job of these dictators is to impose forced labour on the unemployed by their slave camps and Training courses.

British Imperialism is moving to War; one after another, every kind of preparation is being made. Just as Hitler, speaking for the re-arming of Germany, has sent the unemployed to Labour Camps, just as Roosevelt is creating a new army of a quarter of a million men by his labour camps, so now we have Ramsay MacDonald's Labour Camps, in which the unemployed will be put under a discipline that is the prelude to their being put under the discipline of the army in the next imperialist World war.

British Imperialism is moving towards war as its way out of the crisis, and it seeks, meantime, to put burden after burden on the working class, of which this Bill is one sufficient example.

This Bill is the ripe fruit, not only of the National Government, but of the Labour Government, with its Holman Gregory Royal Commission on Unemployment, its Economy Commission, its Anomalies Act and its preparation of the Means Test. This Bill is also the fruit of the attitude of the Labour Party in opposition, which refused to form a united front with the Communist Party, the I.L.P., the N.U.W.M., and other militant organisations against the menace of Fascism, Reaction and War, against the hunger and depression policy of the National Government.

Therefore, to defeat this Bill means the gathering together of all militant workers, employed and unemployed, in a United Front, which,

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

by Mass Demonstrations, by Hunger Marches and by a Congress of Action, will compel the Government to withdraw this Bill, and compel them also to restore the 10 per cent. cut and grant the other demands of the working class.

How grave a menace to the working class is constituted by this Bill can be seen from the following summary of some of its outstanding provisions.

Exhausted statutory benefit

The new Bill divides the unemployed into three grades:

(1) Those in receipt of statutory benefit under the Unemployment Insurance scheme.

(2) Those who have exhausted their statutory benefit and will then pass into an entirely separate scheme under the direction of what is to be known as Unemployment Assistance Boards.

(3) Those who have been unemployed for a very long time or who are not able-bodied and are classified as no longer connected with industry and must then become entirely dependent for any assistance upon the Public Assistance Committees.

The new scheme for those who have exhausted statutory benefit can in truth be described as a glorified Poor Law scheme. All applicants under this scheme will be subject to a Means Test which will be more harshly applied than the existing Means Test in so far that in the new scheme every penny of the family income must be assessed. It will mean that tens of thousands of persons who are now getting transitional benefit under the Means Test will be re-assessed and refused any further assistance under the new scheme.

Dictators

The Unemployment Assistance Board will be a dictatorship: and although the elected local authorities have to foot the largest proportion of the expenses in connection with this scheme they are to have no say in the control and management of the scheme.

Any Unemployment Assistance Board that shows any humanitarian feelings towards the claimants in their claims for assistance under the Means Test can be instantly removed by the Minister of Labour.

Forced Labour conditions

The most dangerous and far-reaching feature of the new Bill is the system of forced labour which is now to be introduced in regard to all claimants for assistance under the new scheme.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The first section of the Bill, namely that dealing with Unemployment Insurance benefit lays it down that the receipt of benefit shall be conditional upon whether "*the claimant has attended a course of instruction if required by the Insurance Officer to do so.*"

The second section of the Bill dealing with persons who have exhausted their statutory benefit and make a claim for assistance under the Unemployment Assistance Boards also lays it down emphatically that the claimant must be prepared to perform work under the Ministry of Labour without wages on reconditioning schemes, public work schemes, labour camps and at industrial training centres.

Where a claimant goes into a labour camp he would be provided with food and an allowance of two or three shillings as pocket money and his family would be dependant upon the assistance received from the Unemployment Assistance Boards on a scale not above, and in most cases below, the statutory benefit scale.

This means the creation of a new slave class from amongst the ranks of the unemployed. A class of persons whom the employers will seek to use for undermining trade union wages and conditions. It constitutes the gravest menace that has ever confronted British Trade Unionism since its inception. It thrusts the unemployed into a condition where they have to work on the very meanest existence basis.

In case it may be assumed that the workers will have a right to refuse to accept these forced labour conditions, the Bill contains a clause to deal with them, and such cases are classed as "*cases of special difficulty.*" The Unemployment Assistance Board in dealing with such cases may order relief to be given to some other member of the household other than in cash and on condition that the applicant himself enters the workhouse where he will be subject to task work.

Should he continue to refuse to enter the workhouse so that his dependents can obtain relief then the Board may prosecute him on the grounds of failure to maintain his dependants. In such cases the claimant will be prosecuted under the Poor Law and imprisoned on a charge of wilful neglect of his dependants.

In addition to the above Slave Labour plan the Minister of Labour, in agreement with the Local Authorities and with the approval of the Treasury, may also enter into arrangements to "further the instruction and training" of an unemployed person by providing periods of not more than three months' work to them. This work it is claimed will be paid for "at the rates of wages customary in the district."

At first glance it would appear from this condition that the Ministry is going to provide employment for wages, but on a closer examination and by practice, it will be found that the local authorities will use the

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

unemployed under this arrangement to perform reconditioning and relief work, at for example, 1s. per hour, but will only employ them for the number of hours necessary to provide them with relief. That is to say, if a man is in receipt of relief to the extent of 25s. a week, the local authorities will employ him by arrangement with the Ministry of Labour for 25 hours per week, and he will thus be working for his relief. Although the Ministry of Labour may claim that they are paying the appropriate usual rate for this class of work it does not alter the fact that this constitutes an attack upon Trade Union principles. If public work schemes and reconditioning work is carried on under such conditions as these it will mean the displacement of hundreds of thousands of ordinary municipal employees who to-day are working the recognised working week at Trade Union wages.

If there was nothing else in the new Unemployment Bill except this scheme of conscript labour it should be sufficient in itself to cause the entire Trade Union movement of this country to go into action to smash the new Unemployment Bill and to bring down the vicious anti-working-class National Government which dares to introduce it.

Trades Disputes Section

Another dastardly feature of the Bill will be to refuse relief to a worker who loses his employment through a trade dispute. It is immaterial that he himself has not been taking part in the dispute. Such cases will be excluded from the Unemployment Assistance scheme and the P.A.C. will not be empowered to grant relief to any persons excluded from the jurisdiction of the Unemployment Assistance Board, and there will be the usual alternative to such workers—the workhouse.

The whole object of this clause is obviously to try and break strikes for better wages and conditions, or for the defence of the already existing wages and standards, and so constitutes another very serious attack on the Trade Union movement of this country.

Dependents' Benefit

Extended provision is made for the payment of dependents' benefit in respect to youths between the ages of 14 and 16, providing the youth satisfies the statutory conditions in respect to the receipt of benefit and providing that they have attended a course of instruction as required. The amount of benefit to be paid in respect of such dependents will be 2s. per week. This means that the youth must be capable and available for work in an insurable trade. When he becomes unemployed he is not able to draw any unemployment benefit himself, although under this new Bill he has had to contribute 2d. per week to the scheme, but if he satisfies all the other conditions mentioned above, dependents'

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

benefit of 2s. per week would be paid to the parent, if the parent is unemployed. Think of it, 2s. per week to feed and clothe a youth of nearly 16 years! The ruling class spend more on their pet cats and dogs!

Appeals to the Umpire

Under Section 8 (5) (b) of the 1930 Act, which specifies some of the persons at whose instance an appeal shall lie from the decision of the Court of Referees, the National Unemployed Workers' Movement was given the right to appeal to the Umpire on behalf of its members, provided that they were members at the date of the Court of Referees and were still members according to rule at the date of the appeal. This section has now been amended to read: "A claimant for benefit shall not, in relation to any appeal, be deemed to be a member of any Association of employed persons unless he was a member thereof on the last date on which he was employed before the claim subject to the appeal was made, and has continued to be a member thereof until the date when the appeal is made."

The National Unemployed Workers' Movement has carried 2,890 appeals of its members to the highest authority of the Unemployment Insurance Scheme, the Umpire, during the years 1931-33, and has succeeded in winning the appeals in 1,020 cases. Thousands of pounds in back pay have been recovered in the winning of these claims and there can be no doubt that the real object of the above clause is to endeavour to debar the National Unemployed Workers' Movement from the right of appeal to the Umpire on behalf of its members.

Every unemployed person should have the right of appeal to the highest authority of the scheme, but this new Bill will rob the unemployed of their appeal rights unless they happen to be members of a Trade Union that does this work, or are members of the N.U.W.M. at the time of their discharge from industry.

This right of the unemployed to combat unjust decisions of the Courts of Referees is a right that must be fought for tenaciously and maintained.

The Insured Worker

When we turn to the section of insured workers, their position also is worsened by the Bill. A new statutory condition compelling the worker to prove that he was "unable to obtain suitable employment" is added—equivalent to a restoration of the "not-genuinely seeking work" clause.

A new weapon is given to the employer by adding to the penalties for discharge for "misconduct" or voluntarily leaving work, a suspension from benefit (on a second occasion) of six months, instead of six weeks as on the first occasion.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Our Demands

We do not take up a purely negative attitude in regard to this question of the new Bill. We put forward a practical programme of demands in relation to unemployment. Amongst these we demand that the maintenance of the unemployed shall be upon a non-contributory scheme financed directly by the National Exchequer, and that benefit should be the right of all unemployed persons until work can be provided.

If the Government claims that this scheme cannot be carried through because of the financial cost, let us remember that during the last War the Government did not hesitate to spend eight million pounds per day on the purposes of destruction. We are surely entitled to demand that at least a portion of such an amount shall now be spent upon the preservation of human life.

If the Government says where is the money coming from ?—we say, make the ruling class pay for the unemployment which their system creates. There is an immediate source that can be tapped, namely, the interest on the National Debt. The National Debt, which represents money borrowed by the Government in various periods, particularly in war time, still stands at roughly £8,000,000,000. The amount of interest that is paid to the bondholders, principally wealthy people, in interest on the bonds that they hold in the debt, amounts to £300,000,000 per annum, roughly £6,000,000 per week. We claim that the conditions of the unemployed in this country are such that this £6,000,000 per week should be stopped as payment of interest and be directed into a non-contributory unemployment scheme. It will be readily seen that even without a single penny raised in any other way it would be sufficient to enable us to pay, if we so desired, more than £2 per week to every man, woman and youth unemployed in this country to-day.

We demand the restoration of the benefit cuts and an adequate scale of maintenance, on the grounds that the unemployed are being slowly starved to-day under the present scales.

We demand the abolition of the Means Test on the grounds that the maintenance of the unemployed is the responsibility of the State and not the responsibility of the relatives of the unemployed person.

We demand work schemes on an extensive scale to be introduced for the unemployed at Trade Union rates of wages and conditions.

There are 800,000 new houses required in this country. There are great areas, such as Yorkshire and Monmouthshire, where because of the inadequate drainage and irrigation system, periodical floods occur and workers have their homes inundated with water and filth. These inundations have occurred over tremendous areas and people have been driven from their homes for weeks at a time to sleep rough in school

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

rooms and town halls, &c., and still the Government takes no action to remedy this situation and provide work for the unemployed.

A serious attempt to tackle the insanitary conditions which prevail in most working-class districts throughout this country would in itself be the means of providing tens of thousands of unemployed persons with employment. A host of other extensive schemes are waiting to be done.

We demand that the 40-hour working week be introduced into all industries without wage reduction as a means of absorbing the unemployed back into industry.

This demand is not only justifiable on the grounds of making provision for the unemployed but from the standpoint of the enormous advances that have been made in the methods of production by the use of science and machinery in industry by which the worker is speeded up and produces on a far higher scale than ever before.

What is to be done?

In face of these new attacks the most urgent question before the whole working class is the building of the most powerful united front of the workers to fight in defence of our conditions. The National Unemployed Workers' Movement has approached the National Labour Party Executive and the Trades Union Congress General Council on this question and has proposed a joint campaign to fight the new attacks.

Both these bodies have refused this approach. Instead, at the National Labour Party Congress at Hastings and the T.U.C. at Brighton, they spent most of their time in vilifying and denouncing all militant movements and threatening those who associated with militant activities with expulsion from the official Labour Movement. In so doing they not only renounce the struggle against the new attacks and split the working-class forces in face of the capitalist enemy, but they set the example to this vicious anti-working-class Government and to the Fascist Police Commissioner Trenchard, to intensify their repressive actions against all militant activity—as seen in the police methods against the recent County Hunger Marches—and to cast into jail the militant leaders of the workers.

We cannot, however, be turned aside from building the United Front of the working class because Citrine, Henderson, and their ilk refuse to make a stand with us. The rank-and-file of the Trade Unions, along with the Political and Co-operative Movements must come together in a mighty phalanx that will resist this new starvation drive of the Government.

Big strides forward have already been taken in this respect in the formation of a National United Front Committee which has the association of many prominent men and women in the working-class movement,

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

including James Maxton, M.P., John McGovern, M.P., Alex. Gossip, General Secretary of the National Furnishing Trades Association, John Jagger, General Secretary of the National Union of Distributive and Allied Workers, Jack Tanner, London District Organiser of the Amalgamated Engineering Union, W. Loeber, of the Railwaymen's Rank-and-File Movement, Harry Pollitt, of the Communist Party, Ted Hill, of the Boilermakers' Union, John Aplin, of the Independent Labour Party, Wal Hannington, Tom Mann and Maud Brown.

A Manifesto has been issued by this Committee calling for the organisation of a great National March on London against the Bill, from all parts of Great Britain, to coincide with the opening of a great National United Front Congress of Action in the Bermondsey Town Hall on February 24, 1934.

All energies must be directed towards making these activities the most powerful that have ever been seen in this country.

To the degree that we can develop mass action of the working class in the form of demonstrations, marches, deputations and strike action against the new Bill, so we succeed in defeating this new move to drive our class further into poverty and degradation.

Only organisation and struggle on the part of the working class can lead to victory against our enemies. The working class must answer the new attacks of this Government with all the power at their command.

We must strengthen the N.U.W.M. We must build a mighty United Front movement of the workers that will arrest the grim hand of starvation that is reaching out into millions of working-class homes to-day—a movement that will be so powerful in numerical strength, so deliberate in its agitational purpose that nothing shall prevent us from smashing this new piece of anti-working-class legislation and sweeping out of existence this Government of hunger, fascism and war.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A ROBBERY OF THE PUBLIC

Exploitation of Youth and Unfortunates

By HARRY DUBOW

(*President, Amalgamated Union of Upholsterers of Great Britain and Ireland*)

HAS anyone, when sitting at ease, in their comfortable, easy chair, ever thought of what is inside it, or about the conditions under which it has been produced? If I were a poet instead of a journeyman upholsterer I would make the "Song of the Shirt" seem a hymn of praise in comparison with the tale of the conditions prevailing in the upholstery trade to-day, especially so as upholstery is so-called luxury.

Now cheap upholstery work is mostly covered in material designed to attract the eye but which with a little wear more often than not proves the theory of "cheap and nasty," though you may have paid a good price for the article. It is all according to the conscience of the salesman, if he has one. Now, what is inside this piece of luxury? It is not unusual for the canvas wrappers of frozen meat to be used. Personally, I have seen lumps of frozen fat, mostly putrid, roll out of this material when being used. On many occasions in the interest of public health, we have, as a Union, reported this to the Local Health Authorities, who have only sometimes intervened.

Now for the stuffing. I remember many years ago Mr. Frank Smith, ex-M.P., who was a member of our Union, telling a story about some friends of his who bought a suite of furniture. Peculiar noises were heard in the room where this suite stood. For a long time he could not discover the cause. Eventually it was discovered to be coming from the couch. When it was opened, among the egg packing shavings used for stuffing, an egg had been hatched. That is, of course, a story, but based on the muck and filth actually used in upholstery work.

There is no waste in the factories where this furniture is produced. A Manchester retailer once actually advertised only "new materials used." At the end of a week's work, the boys will stay behind and sweep up the accumulation of rubbish on the floor. For the dustman? No. It is swept in a heap and used up in the course of the following week's work. Of course it is needless for me to say that there is no time here to clean the floors. Therefore can you be surprised when you see maggots crawl out of furniture? I only recently opened some jobs for re-upholstering, and on taking the outsides off a cloud of moths flew out. Is it to be wondered at, in view of the foregoing facts, that I advised the

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

firm to send for the customer so as they could see what was inside their furniture ?

In one case people complained to the Sanitary Authorities about a smell in the house, but they could not locate it ; eventually maggots were noticed crawling out of the settee, and a substantial sum was paid to the customer to hush up the case. What was found in this job ? Nothing less than a dead cat. This is not an attempt at yellow journalism, but a statement of fact.

In both cases, I have mentioned, fairly good prices were paid for the articles and they could be multiplied by scores. Sawdust, old egg packing materials, wood chips, meat wrappers, bacon wrappers, old canvas from any source, are often used in suites selling from £10 to £15 and over. Also, decency does not permit me to tell what a fellow upholsterer recently found inside a job which he had to re-upholster that had obviously been made by a woman.

I wonder how many of the general public have ever heard of the Rag Flock Act which is on the Statute Book ? What it means and why it has been put there. When I first came into the trade rags and old clothes from all sources, however filthy, were collected and teased up by carding machines into what is known in the trade as flock-wool. I remember, as a lad, collecting any peculiar trouser buttons that I found at the bottom of the bags in which this stuff was sold, as souvenirs. This filthy material was put not only in furniture but also in bedding. After a long agitation by our Union, with the help of friend Smith and others, this Rag Flock Act was passed forbidding the use of these rags unless they were sterilised. The fact that it was necessary to bring in an Act of Parliament to stop this menace to Public Health is in itself a scandal, but there are still prosecutions to-day under this Act, whenever we can persuade the Local Authorities to move.

If you buy a suite and the advertisement tells you that it is hair-stuffed, the whole lot may not contain a pound of hair. One pound of hair to one cwt. of fibre is not an unusual proportion, which is as well, perhaps, for in many cases it comes out of old mattresses, so goodness only knows what germs you are taking into the home when you bring this furniture or bedding to your house.

Now a word about the conditions under which this furniture is produced and where it is made. Any stable loft or basement cellar does as a factory, or a derelict factory is taken and manned entirely by boy labour under the most sweated conditions. In many instances the lavatory, despite Factory Acts, would have been a disgrace in the middle ages. The only time a man applies for a job in these places, which are nothing more than rat-holes, is when he has unfortunately been out of employment for a considerable time and has exhausted all his unemployment benefit. Undoubtedly the Means Test has forced many to work

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

under these conditions. Then he is compelled by hook or crook to obtain ten stamps to obtain further benefits, after which he has to use his wits to leave this job without disqualifying himself from future benefit at the Labour Exchange because no man can stop at these jobs without undermining his health. What with the unsanitary materials they have to use and the excessive hours worked, illness is inevitable, apart from carrying disease to their home.

We have come across cases where these people have worked right through the day and night for three or four days in one week and sometimes on Sundays yet not earned the equivalent of our minimum rate for an ordinary week's work. One employer in South Wales actually locked the door and kept young workers until 3 a.m. Several times men in the same place, which is a piecework shop, have earned nothing from eight in the morning till four in the afternoon, and then been compelled to work till three a.m. because the lorry was waiting. I could mention cases where some of these people have refused to work these excessive hours, have been discharged and the employer has notified the Labour Exchange that they, the workers, had left work on their own accord, causing them to be disqualified from benefit for six weeks, which meant that they and their dependents had to exist on poor relief or charity for that period.

A far more serious indictment against the producers of this class of furniture is the exploitation of boy labour. In a good many instances parents, who have all their work cut out to maintain their children while at school, pay premiums thinking, in their ignorance, that the lad will be taught a trade; but they are soon disillusioned, for an intelligent boy can, in about a year, learn all that these people can teach him. The rest of the boy's time is spent producing the utmost amount of this rubbish that his strength will permit. Obviously you cannot expect a boy to understand the meaning of reserving his energy. All that the lad thinks of is about the extra few shillings he might, with the generosity of the employer, pick up at the end of the week. But at what expense? The result of the lad working at this pace is that at the expiry of his apprenticeship he becomes almost a spent force.

There is no other trade in modern industry that requires the amount of concentrated energy that has to be used to produce this class of work in the quantity that these lads have to turn out. They become faster than a machine, but after a few years at it a youth becomes almost an old man. If you think I am exaggerating go outside any of these factories and watch them coming out after a day's work. You will then perhaps understand the meaning of the words: "the survival of the fittest." Middle-aged men you will rarely see; men getting on in years, never.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

I have mentioned premiums supplied by needy parents. I may say that in some cases this premium money comprises the total capital on which these particular firms work. Recently one of these firms went into bankruptcy and we found that they had left stranded as many as 24 of these lads, who had paid premiums. Some of the parents came to our Union for advice. Others appealed to us for legal assistance which we willingly gave them and, fortunately obtained, a little for them by our intervention.

Where a lad has finished his apprenticeship and has the temerity to ask for a rise, because he feels that his responsibility at home should be greater, or perhaps is looking forward to a home of his own, he is invariably discharged because his labour has become too dear. We could quote instances where lads through long spells of unemployment have been only too pleased to accept any labouring job going. Some I personally know have been selling papers on the streets. What a tragedy, after serving an apprenticeship and paying a premium!

We, as a Union, have, and always will, do our best for them. But you, Mr. John Citizen, can greatly assist them and us by making sure that the article from which you will expect comfort and ease is made by a reputable T.U. firm, thus ensuring that the interior consists of decent material, also having the satisfaction of knowing that it has been produced under fair conditions. I can assure that I have in no way exaggerated the case.

Over the past year the Executive of the Union has carried on an intensive organising effort, striving to establish unity between young and adult workers, supporting shop after shop where the workers were prepared to attempt to improve their conditions, even if they were not members of our organisation. As a result, our membership has grown and improvements in conditions secured in many instances.

More and more retailers, as a result of "competition," are buying their goods from so-called wholesale upholsterers, so that even if you buy your goods in the main shopping centre it may have been manufactured in some back street factory under the conditions I have described. The much boosted cheapness of furniture has been achieved at the cost of poverty, hunger and dirt, shoddy workmanship, sweated labour and inferior products.

So the vicious circle goes on. Low wages drive the worker to cheapness. Every section of the employing class seeks to meet its market problem by yet lower wages and yet shoddier articles. Our object is to strive for better factory conditions, decent wages, and clean, decently made goods.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE IRISH LABOUR PARTY AND FASCISM

By BRIAN O'NEILL

THE Irish Labour Party is European Social Democracy's *lusus naturæ ;* the jabberwock of the Second International's collection of strange beasts. The Austro-Marxists must " quote " Marx to justify their reformism and renunciation of Marxism ; the German Social Democratic Party " recognises " the class struggle ; and even the British Labour Party talks woolily of the abolition of capitalism and the establishment of socialist society. But the Irish Labour Party for a decade now has not troubled to give even verbal adherence to the tenets of working-class aims and policy. The Irish Labour reformists are shameless in their reformism ; there is no pretence that reformism is a " constitutional means to socialism." ; reformism is admitted to be the end itself.

The rôle of the Labour Party leaders as the journeymen of capitalist imperialism in Ireland has become ever more clear since the Treaty that terminated the Anglo-Irish war in 1922. From the opening shot of the Great War in 1914 they had played an unheroic part in Irish life ; with the Treaty they sank to the basest levels. To-day they talk much of " patriotism " and the " nation's struggle," hoping apparently that the workers' memory is as short as their own effrontery is great. The Irish Labour Party had no part officially in the 1916 uprising, and the working-class forces who formed the vanguard of the rebel forces came from the most devoted and class conscious proletarians organised in James Connolly's Irish Citizen Army. " In the actual fighting," reported the Irish T.U.C. and Labour Party to the Second International, " it is certain that the majority of the insurgents were trade unionists, although no union, as such, had any part in the insurrection." In fact, at the Labour Party's Conference in August, 1916, the president, Thomas Johnson (he was one of those whom the Free State delighted to honour ; he is now a senator), announced that the conference was not the place to discuss " the right or the wrong, the wisdom or the folly of the revolt."

True, in the closing years of the war, when the world revolutionary wave was showing the reformists of all countries the way the wind was blowing, the Labour Party leaders also had their moment of brave rebelly talk. They spoke of self-determination for Ireland, invoked Connolly's memory and the Workers' Republic, and sent greetings to the Kerensky Government in Russia and delegates to the Stockholm Conference. But when the Irish capitalist class betrayed the national cause

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

by accepting the Treaty of 1922, which gave threequarters of Ireland the status of a Dominion, granted fiscal autonomy to the national bourgeoisie, but maintained British imperialism's hold of the country both in the economic and military fields, the Labour and Trade Union leaders strove to hold back the workers from any struggle against the Treaty. The reformists maintained "neutrality" on the whole question. They attempted to mediate between the Republican and Free State groups, and even called a one-day "anti-militarist" strike in April, 1922, in order to alienate trade unionists from the Irish Republican Army. They dared not show their hands in any other way; had they revealed themselves at that stage to be openly pro-Treaty, the thousands of anti-imperialists in the trade unions would have swept them aside. But by a posture of neutrality on the Treaty and calling the attention of the workers to unemployment and wage reductions, which they suddenly discovered to be most urgent questions, they hoped to smooth the path of the Treatyites and enter the Free State Dail, with the balance of power, as the accepted spokesmen of Labour.

And if the Labour Party, during the ten years in which it was aiding the Cosgrave régime to set the Free State on its feet, forgot the nationalist phrases which the struggle taught it after 1916, its present position as the social plumber's mate of the De Valera Government has forced it to shed whatever pitiful shreds of socialist phrases it might still possess. So low has it fallen that the annual conference, held in Dublin on October 20 and 21, 1933, could get through without mention of Socialism or the class struggle. The conference showed the Labour Party leaders to have no other policy for the working class than the begging of small unimportant concessions from the Fianna Fail Government as the price of parliamentary support in its anti-working-class measures. "Small minds have small desires."

Engels noted that "Ireland is still a sacred isle, whose sufferings must in no way be confused with the vulgar class struggle of the rest of the sinful world." But nor all the piety nor wit of the De Valera Government has succeeded in cancelling half a line of the monthly trade figures. And these reveal that the irreverent world crisis of capitalism has not halted at Ireland's shores. Ireland is no exception to the collapse of capitalism. The working masses of town and country are feeling acutely the lash of a ruling class striving desperately to maintain its rulership. Yet in this situation, when the question of a way out of the chaos and misery of capitalism becomes ever more urgent for the Irish working class, the Irish Labour Party steps forward with State Capitalism as the solution. True, Mr. William O'Brien, in his presidential address, was daring enough to mention "the world collapse of capitalism." But he followed up this with mild criticism of the Government's tariff policy as not going far

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

enough (how far it has gone the child and girl victims of the puny new sweatshops could testify !), and advised Fianna Fail that its " industrial construction " must take the form of " what we in the Labour Party call national corporations "—in other words, State Capitalism. It must be admitted that Mr. O'Brien declared that these national corporations (the Fascist flavour is to be remarked) should be " charged with the duty of production, not to make profits, but to serve the needs of the people." But Mr. O'Brien " forgot " to tell the conference that the sole purpose of industry under the present system is profit. Above all, like the English Mr. Herbert Morrison when writing recently of the " reformist " economics of the Soviet Union, Mr. O'Brien " forgot " the little matters of political power, the State, and the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism, all of which trifles must be attended to before industry can " serve the needs of the people." Mr. O'Brien's " national corporations " were no mere children of his own brain, as was shown by the resolution proposed by the Administrative Council and accepted by the conference without demur :—

> That in view of the *failure of private enterprise to develop* the industrial resources of the nation and the *slow industrial progress* recorded under tariffs, this conference demands that the Government shall adopt a vigorous policy of developing the industrial potentialities of the country by the establishment of State-controlled public corporations.

The Labour leaders showed themselves wholeheartedly against the resolution sponsored by the Dublin Central branch, which condemned the Fianna Fail Government for reviving the Cosgrave Coercion Act—ostensibly for use against O'Duffy's fascist Blue Shirts, the bloused levies of imperialists in Ireland.

The real answer to official arguments came in a motion by the Bray branch—a motion calling for mass struggle as the only way to defeat the Fascist menace :—

> That this conference of the Irish Labour Party considers the National Guard movement as an anti-working-class force, with aims and intentions similar to Hitler's Nazis and Mussolini's Fascists, under whose rules in Germany and Italy the trade unions, all labour organisations and other working-class organs of struggle against capitalist tyranny have been brutally broken up and outlawed, their leaders imprisoned, tortured and murdered, their funds stolen, property confiscated, and Press suppressed ; that this conference warns the Irish workers and Labour Party supporters of the dangers of the introduction of similar forms of Fascism into Ireland ; that this conference calls for a resolute struggle against all attempts at establishing a Fascist dictatorship in any guise in Ireland, and instructs the Administrative Council to take every possible step in conjunction with all forces opposing that reactionary dictatorship to combat this great danger to the labour movement.

The motion was carried, and officialdom has gone back to its offices to utter no word either in exposure of the Fascist menace or about the

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

unity of all Labour forces called for to meet the menace. Their lead to the Irish masses differs in words only from the lead of the German Social Democrats in a similar situation : " Leave it to the Government," " trust De Valera," " no disorder, the forces of the State are competent to deal with the Blue Shirts." And in fact it would be absurd to expect any struggle against Fascism from the Labour Party leaders. Did not Mr. W. Davin, a leading Labour deputy, plead in the Dail for General O'Duffy's pension to be given " with a good grace," and speak at the same time of the police chief's dismissal as " victimisation " ? Senator Johnson aforementioned went further. In the Senate debate on the Free State Government's ban on the Blue Shirts, the Labour leader in the Senate deprecated mildly the " militarism " of the Blue Shirts, which, he said, " is undoubtedly going to lead to revolt not merely by the I.R.A., but by every other democratic organisation that feels its principles are being destroyed." He went on virtually to endorse the so-called " vocational representation " groups, borrowed by O'Duffy from Mussolini and the Fascist economics of national socialism. Johnson said :

> On the other hand, there is so much good in the economic proposals of the National Guard that the Government should have encouraged a discussion of the ideas that were being broached by that organisation. I believe that because they were fathered by a sinister movement, what is good in them will be destroyed and the advantages will be ultimately lost.

If words mean anything, the Labour senator stands for the Fascist social policy, but regrets that such a blatantly imperialist pack of blackguards as the Blue Shirts should be the group to introduce it to Ireland and thereby discredit it. To expect such as Johnson to carry out the resolution of the Labour conference would be " baying the moon." But the workers in Labour Party branches undoubtedly have a fierce hatred of Fascism and a desire to fight it. Trade Unionists also want to struggle, although they have received no lead of any kind from the Irish T.U.C. The recent happenings in Kerry demonstrate not alone the readiness of the rank-and-file of the labour movement to struggle against Fascism, but the movement of the advanced sections to thrust aside the barriers against action created by the Fianna Fail Government and the Labour bureaucracy.

Kerry is the most devoted republican county in Ireland ; it was unbreakable in 1922-23, when the British armed troops of the newly-established Free State were hunting down the remnants of the I.R.A. resistance to the Treaty. No county suffered so severely from the barbarities of the forces that were " establishing law and order in the country." At Ballyseedy and Killarney, in March, 1923, the Free State soldiers took seventeen Kerrymen and murdered them by binding them

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with electric wires to fallen trees and blowing them to pieces by the explosion of land-mines. Nearly fifty others were "executed" in jail or shot down in the fields and on the roadsides. Kerry has never forgotten, and the cry of "Remember Ballyseedy!" has driven out every attempt of the Treatyites to gain a footing there. When in October last, therefore, O'Duffy and his Blueshirts attempted to stage a demonstration in Tralee, the whole town rose in horror against these fascist agents of England who, in many cases, bore individual responsibility for the Civil War atrocities. Fianna Fail's police could not hold back the people, and the Blueshirts were driven indoors, to be rescued only by tin-hatted troops and armoured cars. In the sequel, fourteen Tralee republicans were charged before the Military Tribunal (functioning once more under the revived Coercion Act), and twelve were sentenced to terms of four to six months for "riot and unlawful assembly." A demand for the immediate release of the prisoners arose at once from the local republican and working-class bodies, and when the government upheld the Tribunal decision, a conference in Tralee decided to call a general strike in the town on December 15. The conference was entirely unofficial; no Trade Union executive endorsed it, and rank-and-file members of Fianna Fail clubs attended in defiance of the county executive of the Party. And only the manœuvres of the local leadership of Fianna Fail, the inspired whispers that the prisoners would be freed for Christmas and the sabotage of the reactionaries in some of the trade union branches prevented the strike from taking place. As it was, the call for the mass political strike, and the mobilisation achieved, mark a tremendous step forward for the mass anti-imperialist movement and bring right to the foreground the forces that alone can carry the national struggle to victory.

Kerry workers and republicans have given a lead to the whole country. They have shown that the united anti-imperialist movement can be forged in action. It is along these lines that the republican forces, the rank-and-file of the Labour Party and Trade Unions, and the Communist Party of Ireland can be brought together in spite of the attempt of the Fianna Fail government and Labour bureaucracy to handcuff the movement. It is along these lines that a nation-wide anti-fascist movement can be built to take up the mass organised struggle that alone can defeat O'Duffy and all other fascist-imperialist groupings in Ireland.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The World of Labour

GREAT BRITAIN

Documents on the United Front

THIS month the documentation of the United Front Campaign is continued, which was previously dealt with in the April, July and November issues of the LABOUR MONTHLY of last year.

It will be recalled that as a result of the joint meeting between the C.P. and I.L.P. on May 5th last year a joint statement was issued laying down that the basis of this campaign lay in the struggle against Fascism, War, a break with the Soviet Union and the building up of resistance against the attacks on the conditions of the employed and unemployed workers. The statement then went into more detail on how the struggle against the capitalist offensive could be waged, e.g. :—(*a*) Resistance to wage cuts ; (*b*) Means Test abolition ; (*c*) Housing and rent demands ; (*d*) 40-hours week without wage reductions and other shorter hours proposals ; (*e*) free speech and release of political prisoners throughout the British Empire.

At the May meeting of the National Administrative Council (N.A.C.) of the I.L.P., as was pointed out in the last instalment of this documentation in the November issue, it was stated that the N.A.C., in submitting the agreement with the C.P. for united front action to the branches, would warn them not to neglect their work " as a distinct organisation."

Following on this warning, the June 30th issue of the *New Leader* published a report of the next meeting of the N.A.C. in which it was stated that :

> Branches should be advised in their United Front activities to concentrate on emphasising and strengthening the work for united action against War and Fascism, and in support of all activities against the Means Test.

As was pointed out by Harry Pollitt in a reference to this statement, in an article quoted below from the *Daily Worker* of August 5th : " With the exception of a reference to the Means Test, what this really means is the throwing over of the May Agreement . . . ." That is to say that the decision at the May joint meeting to co-operate in working for the objects outlined under points (a), (c), (d) and (e) as above was in effect ignored.

Meanwhile, in the *Daily Worker* for May 15, correspondence was published between the General Council of the T.U.C. and the National Unemployed Workers' Movement (N.U.W.M.) which had resulted from a request by the latter to the former to arrange a joint meeting to discuss the following proposals which were adopted at the N.U.W.M. Eighth National Conference held at Manchester at Easter : (1) The abolition of the Means Test and the restoration of the right of all unemployed claimants to full benefit ; (2) The starting of an effective plan of public work schemes by the national and local Government authorities under full trade union wages and conditions ; (3) For the establishment of a 40-hour working week in all industries without wage reductions, as a means of alleviating the unemployment problem.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mr. Citrine, in replying on behalf of the General Council, refused to agree to a meeting, stating that " through the Parliamentary Labour Party, Trades Councils, local Labour Parties and the Co-operative sections the Labour Movement as a whole is the most responsible and suitable body to deal with the points " (set out above).

On March 26 a joint meeting was also held between the I.L.P. Guild of Youth and the Young Communist League to discuss proposals for united front action amongst the youth. At this meeting a representative was also in attendance in an unofficial capacity from the Co-operative Youth Movement. The Labour League of Youth was reported to have refused to send representatives on the grounds that " their policy was determined by the Labour Party."

Various proposals for joint action were agreed upon, fuller discussion being referred to a later date. In particular it was agreed to give full support to the visit of the German Workers' Football Team at Easter, to secure maximum youth representation at the International Anti-Fascist Conference and to organise councils of action in the factories and amongst the young unemployed. At a further meeting on May 7, at which the British Federation of Co-operative Youth was this time officially represented, it was decided that " the main drive," according to the *New Leader* of May 12, " is based upon the struggle for the defence of the interests of young workers in factories, Labour Exchanges, training centres and trade unions against the capitalist offensive, Fascism and war preparations." An intensified drive was also decided upon for delegates to the World Anti-Fascist Congress at Whitsun and the World Youth Anti-War and Fascist Congress, held in Paris in September last.

In July a breakaway from the united front occurred in the defection of the Lancashire Divisional Council of the I.L.P. (No. 9). The E.C. of the latter body had issued a letter (*Daily Worker*, July 13; in reality, issued a week or two earlier), asking :—

> " That the branches be recommended to withdraw from any further collaboration with the C.P. and to concentrate upon I.L.P. propaganda and building up I.L.P. membership, because, according to reports, the precipitate alliance with the C.P. undertaken by our N.A.C. without consulting the branches, has resulted in a serious loss of good members and a decline in I.L.P. activity. While the joint mass meetings against Fascism may have served a useful purpose, our branches are not able to continue the working arrangement without incurring the risk of absorption by the C.P. or of neglecting the essential I.L.P. work."
>
> " There can be no united front," continues the Lancashire document, " unless the workers, organised industrially, politically, and co-operatively, take part. It is quite apparent that owing to the peculiar tactics of the C.P. inspired by Moscow the organised workers will not take common action with it."

This statement was " the subject of a strong protest by the National Council " of the I.L.P., according to the *New Leader* of July 21, which pointed out that the letter had not yet been before the Divisional Council. It demanded that the agreement between the I.L.P. and C.P., which it stated was " being amicably carried out by these two bodies . . . shall be honoured to the full by all sections of the Party in Lancashire."

Nevertheless, at the half-yearly Divisional Council's meeting on August 19 the following resolution was carried by 31 votes to 26 : " It is the view of the No. 9 Division that the United Front activities with the Communist Party should be discontinued at once, as these are quite definitely killing our identity as a Party, whilst frittering away valuable energy and finance in resultless activity." (*New Leader*, August 25.) Further, the E.C. of this Divisional Council decided, according to the same issue of the *New Leader*, by 10 votes to 5, not to withdraw its original circular announcing this discontinuation of united front activities with the C.P.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Objections to further united front activities with the C.P. had apparently also been raised in the North-East Divisional Council E.C., but its decision in this sense was not supported by the Divisional Council at its next meeting, according to the *New Leader* for September 15.

The action of the Lancashire Divisional Council of the I.L.P. was followed by similar action by the Welsh Divisional Council (whose resolution was given in the *Daily Worker* for August 8) on the grounds that " no good purpose can be served " by a further joint meeting with the C.P.

In spite however of these defections the National Administrative Council at its meeting over the week-end of August 4–7, adopted a new policy statement which included the following paragraphs :—

> The policy proposed to meet these anticipated developments is based in the main on the organisation of the working class for the achievement of a revolutionary Socialist programme.
>
> The present co-operation with the Communist Party is regarded as the first step in realising a real unity of working-class forces for revolutionary Socialist purposes.
>
> The present co-operation must be continued and constant efforts made to bring into it other working-class organisations of the Labour Party, the trade union and Co-operative movements and any other organisation prepared to collaborate.
>
> It is proposed to participate actively in the rank-and-file movement within the trade unions and in other ways to strengthen the struggle against the present reformist leadership.

At this meeting it was also announced that John Paton had resigned from the General Secretaryship of the I.L.P., admittedly following a discussion in the N.A.C. of the I.L.P. on the question of continuing united front action with the C.P. as well as on the interpretation of the decisions at the National Conference of the I.L.P. at Derby.

Throughout last summer the united front received support from branches, trades councils, etc., and in meetings all over the country and at several of the National Conferences of the Labour Movement, as detailed below, resolutions in this direction received very considerable support :—

The Annual Conference of the National Union of Distributive and Allied Workers on April 16–17, in its resolution against Fascism, decided to instruct its Executive Council " to take every step that will assist the building of a strong united front of all working-class organisations for action against the drive to Fascism and War of the British Government. We declare that the best support for our German comrades is a militant fight against every form of capitalist attack on the working class in this and other countries."

At the Annual General Meeting of the National Union of Railwaymen, held in the week beginning July 1, a resolution was moved expressing " disgust " at the nature of the response of the General Council of the T.U.C. to the appeal for a united front from the C.P.G.B. and I.L.P., and declaring the willingness of the Conference " to co-operate with all working-class bodies in their attempts to form a united front " in the fight against fascism, war and the attacks on working-class standards. This resolution, after a full discussion, when put to the vote, received 31 votes in favour and 49 against.

At the Jubilee Conference of the Women's Co-operative Guild on June 20 and 21, an amendment was carried in favour of united action by all working-class organisations. The original resolution limited this united front to the Labour Party, the T.U.C. and the Co-operative Movement.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

At the Labour Women's Conference, Ellen Wilkinson and Dorothy Wise appealed for a united front of all working-class organisations against the Fascist menace. They urged that if Labour leaders could appear on the same platform as Liberals and Conservatives, say, on behalf of the League of Nations, &c., they could unite with the I.L.P. and the C.P. against Fascism. (*New Leader*, May 26.)

In the *Daily Worker* of August 5, an article appeared by Harry Pollitt, which stated that the Secretariat of the C.P. had addressed a letter to the I.L.P. proposing a further joint meeting of the two bodies " with a view of discussing the experiences in the united front campaign, what weaknesses have been revealed, and what steps can now be taken to really build up a fighting united front of the working class in view of the new critical situation we all have to face."

Pollitt referred to a meeting of the Central Committee of the C.P. on June 17, at which a discussion had taken place on the United Front and at which a resolution had been carried, published at the time in the *Daily Worker*, from which he quoted as follows :—

> The Communist Party cannot remain satisfied with the present position, and steps must be taken immediately to profit by recent experiences and weaknesses, so as to bring about an immediate improvement in the situation.
>
> At present the united front is largely confined to platform meetings and demonstrations, without practical application in the factories and trade unions.
>
> Until the firm basis of united activity has been laid in these decisive places, there can be no real organisation of the organs of united struggle that alone can guarantee the demands of the workers being realised.

In a concluding paragraph Pollitt referred to the refusal in particular of the Lancashire Divisional Council to continue the United Front activity with the C.P. [the Editor of the *New Leader* (August 25) announced, in referring to this decision, that the National Council of the I.L.P. " will consider the matter at its next meeting."] Pollitt said : " This flagrant overturning of the Derby Conference decisions was taken up by the N.A.C. with Sandham, but the fact remains that neither in Lancashire or South Wales have the N.A.C. the power to compel their divisional councils to carry out the decisions of their own conferences." He continued :

" We hope it will be possible to arrange an immediate meeting with the I.L.P. in order to end the present unsatisfactory position of the united campaigns. Where full support is given great things can be done, as has been proved by the Communist Party and I.L.P. members in Glasgow and London especially."

In conclusion, Pollitt expressed the hope that in view of the critical situation " really serious efforts shall now be made to stop any further philandering and playing about with the united front campaign and that in the words of our last letter to the I.L.P., can result in a meeting where :—

> " We can take the necessary measures to ensure that the united front campaign is no longer confined to platform meetings, but will centre chiefly upon the factories and trade unions, in order to build up the forces that can organise the mass action of the workers to realise the aims of the united front programme."

(*To be Continued*)

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOK REVIEWS

FROM 1844 TO 1934.

The Condition of the Working Class in Britain. By Allen Hutt. With an Introduction by Harry Pollitt. (Martin Lawrence.) 2s. 6d.

IN the nine months since its original publication, Comrade Hutt's book has established itself, not only in Marxist circles, but also in Labour and bourgeois circles, as a classic record of the condition of the British working class in the post-war period, and more particularly in the period of the great economic crisis. It is one of the few publications of which it may be said with confidence that it will live, and constitute a permanent storehouse for future historians.

The real subject and purpose of this book has, nevertheless, been widely distorted and misunderstood in bourgeois treatment. Bourgeois reviewers, unable to question or refute a single one of the carefully tested facts brought forward, have contented themselves to endeavour to bury the book in general praise as a valuable documentary and descriptive record. Labour reviewers have contented themselves to praise it as an invaluable propagandist's handbook.

Yet in fact the book is a direct and deliberate challenge to the whole system of bourgeois and Labour thought. Hutt has stated his purpose with specific clearness in the first lines of his Preface. As against the professed aim of Brockway's *Hungry England*—" My purpose has been to describe and not to diagnose "—Hutt declares : " I have been throughout concerned to diagnose the ills of society in Britain to-day ; for it is apparent that description alone is idle, if these frightful ills are to be cured." The book is in fact at once an indictment of existing capitalism and its entire outcome after a century and a half of unrestricted working, and a scientific diagnosis on the basis of the conditions described, that is to say, a laying bare of the class-relations underlying these conditions, and a consequent demonstration of the revolutionary line as the sole line of their transformation. The bourgeois reviewers have neither attempted to answer this indictment ; it is in fact unanswerable ; nor have they attempted to answer the revolutionary diagnosis, whose correctness will finally be demonstrated by practice.

The importance of the book lies precisely in this attempt to combine description with diagnosis, and to draw scientifically from the description definite political conclusions for practice.

How far does the book achieve this aim ? Its strength lies in the following characteristics.

First, it demonstrates the concrete realities of existing society in the life, combining the conclusions of statistical and official documents with direct, living and burning first-hand description. The generalisations as to the workings of capitalism, exploitation, poverty and oppression are here brought to life on a basis of complete, widely extended and unanswerable description.

Second, it bases every description in terms of class-relations, shows the parallel development of capitalism and the working class in each industrial area, lays bare the working out of trustification and rationalisation in the worsening of working-class conditions, and presents the working-class throughout, not as a passive subject of " investigation," but in living movement and struggle, sketching in, though briefly, the development of the class struggle in each area.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Third, it indicates, though briefly, the political conclusions to be drawn in the necessary line of the working class revolution, as against the reformist illusions and deceptions, disproved by hard facts. This is further worked out in Comrade Pollitt's Introduction.

How far are these tasks successfully achieved ?

The first is fully achieved. The essential ground is completely covered. and the result constitutes a permanent record, which could hardly be improved (save so far as the author may decide to incorporate subsequent information in future editions). In this achievement lies the lasting value of the book.

The second and third are more briefly covered ; and it is in respect of these that lies the opportunity and need for further working out, if not in the present book, then in other books. It is this briefness and incompleteness of the analytical and political treatment that may in part account for the failure of the bourgeois and Labour reviewers to appreciate the true significance of this book as a damning refutation of all their theories.

The title, no less than the character and contents, of the book inevitably challenge comparison with Engels' *Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844*. And indeed the present book forms a valuable pendant to Engels' famous work, demonstrating after nearly a century's experience how completely the Marxist analysis and predictions have been justified and realised by subsequent facts, and how completely all the bourgeois, reformist, Labourist and Fabian expectations have been refuted by facts.

Nevertheless, it may still be of use to see how far we can still learn to-day from Engels' treatment.

Lenin has an illuminating comment to make on Engels' book :

> The fruit of these studies and observations was his book, *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, published in 1845. Even before Engels, many writers had described the sufferings of the proletariat and had urged the need for helping them. But Engels was the *first* to say that the proletariat was *not only* a suffering class, but that it was precisely the shameful economic conditions in which the proletariat had to live that were unrestrainedly urging it forward and compelling it to fight for its own emancipation. And the fighting proletariat *would help itself*. The working-class political movement would inevitably make the working class understand that there was no way out for it except socialism. On the other hand, socialism would become a force only when it became the goal of the *political* struggle of the working class. These are the main ideas that run through Engels' book, *The Condition of the Working Class in England*. (Lenin, *Collected Works*. Vol. I.)

Not the mere description of the sufferings, nor even the mere indication of the necessary solution, but the demonstration of the independent revolutionary rôle of the working class as the creative force generated by the conditions and inevitably leading to the solution by its political fight—this is the key to Engels' book. This statement of the aim may be preferred as more exact than the statement of the aim of " diagnosis " and " cure," which is still in danger of suggesting the " doctor " above the battle, outside the classes, delineating the ills and indicating the remedies. The importance of the conditions is as the revolutionising force ; the fight of the working class, the rising political consciousness of the working class, is the central theme, towards which Engels' book is a contribution and a weapon, and the description of the conditions is subordinate to this. This integral unity of the description and revolutionary analysis is achieved by Engels with a basic completeness from which we can still learn.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Let us note, as a means of coming closer to this question, the comparative structure of Engels' book and of Hutt's book.

Engels' book contains the following chapters :

1. Introduction (general development of capitalism and proletariat in England).
2. The Industrial Proletariat.
3. The Great Towns.
4. Competition.
5. Irish Immigration.
6. Results.
7. Single Branches of Industry—Factory Hands.
8. The Remaining Branches of Industry.
9. Labour Movements.
10. The Mining Proletariat.
11. The Agricultural Proletariat.
12. Attitude of the Bourgeoisie towards the Proletariat.

Hutt's book contains the following chapters :

1. The South Wales Coalfield To-day.
2. Lancashire : The " Classic " Soil of Capitalism.
3. Crisis on Clydeside.
4. London.
5. Unemployment and the " Economy Onslaught.
6. " Women and Children First."
7. The Toilers of the Countryside.
8. The Middle Class and the Black-coated Workers.
9. The Attitude of the Bourgeoisie towards the Proletariat.
10. The Fight for Socialism.

The first four " regional " chapters contain seven-tenths of the whole.

Engels' book begins :

> The history of the proletariat in England begins with the second half of the last century, with the invention of the steam engine and of machinery for working cotton. These inventions gave rise, as is well known, to an industrial revolution, a revolution which altered the whole civil society ; one, the historical importance of which is only now beginning to be realised. England is the classic soil of this transformation, which was all the mightier, the more silently it proceeded ; and England is therefore the classic land of its chief product also, the proletariat. Only in England can the proletariat be studied in all its relations and from all sides.

Hutt's book begins :

> A hundred years and more ago the valley beds and mountain sides of South Wales and Monmouthshire cradled the newborn capitalist heavy industries—coalmining and the manufacture of heavy metals. The ironmasters who have driven levels and worked outcrops to obtain coal as a necessary adjunct to the smelting of the ore began to sink deep pits and work the coal for its own sake ; the development of the steam engine and the discovery of the steam coal seams of the Aberdare, Rhondda and Monmouthshire Western valleys combined to provide the technical basis for a constantly expanding capitalist coalmining industry.

It will be seen already on a first examination—and a continued study of the treatment throughout, and of the type of issues discussed, would carry this further—that there is an instructive difference in the whole method of approach.

Engels' approach is more basic ; more theoretical ; treating the development of capitalism and the proletariat as a whole before coming to the sections ;

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

placing the proletariat from the forefront in the centre of the picture; and more political throughout.

First, Engels sets out from a scientific basis—the study of the proletariat, and not merely of the proletariat in England as a particular historical phenomenon, but avowedly in order on the basis of England to lay bare the general laws of existence, development and rôle of the proletariat (" only in England can the proletariat be studied in all its relations and from all sides ").

Second, Engels sets out in the forefront the development of capitalism and the proletariat as a whole, the historical situation, the relations of society, of the state, &c., and the development to revolution, and only on this basis comes to the sectional and particular treatments.

Third, Engels combines the treatment of the particular facts throughout with basic theoretical explanation (compare especially the chapters on " Competition " and on " Results ").

Fourth, Engels concerns himself closely, not only with the material conditions, but equally with the ideological life of the proletariat, the outlook, customs, morals, interests; and above all, he gives the most detailed attention to all the political trends in the working class, devoting his third longest chapter to " Labour Movements," to an examination, against a historical background, with a critical analysis of their principles, of the various phases of trade unionism, Radicalism, Chartism, and " English Socialism."

Fifth, Engels' political conclusions are completely interwoven throughout in his whole treatment.

These characteristics are far less developed in Hutt's work. Hutt plunges at once into a detail description of a particular area, with no previous examination of the general situation of capitalism and the working class in Britain. This regional or provincial character of his examination covers the main part of his work (the first 180 pages out of 254). The next four chapters are also in fact sectional (" Unemployment " does not deal with the issue of unemployment, its development and significance for the working class since the war, but only with information on the conditions of the unemployed and their treatment by the bourgeoisie, and their resistance). The ninth chapter on " The Attitude of the Bourgeoisie " gives some information on luxury expenditure of the bourgeoisie and on increasing state and police oppression of the workers. The tenth chapter, in only 4½ pages out of 254, gives in what is little more than a summary appendix all the political questions, the situation of capitalism and the working class as a whole in post-war Britain, the policies of the Labour Party, of the Trades Union Congress and of Communism, and the revolutionary way out. The Trades Union Congress and Labour Party as manifestations of the working class (apart from previous brief district and sectional references) receive 23 lines between them.

What is missing? First, there is practically no survey of the situation of capitalism and the working class as a whole in Britain in the post-war period, or in the conditions of the crisis. The regional information cannot replace this necessary survey. There is no examination of the social structure as a whole, the division of classes, the different strata of the working class, the shifting relations of heavy industry, light industry, new " luxury " industries and non-productive occupations, the general level and movement of wages, the diminishing share of the working class in the total national income, the close relation of bourgeois and reformist policy to the worsening of the workers' conditions.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Second, there is no real survey, politically speaking, of the working-class movement, its trends and their significance. The district and regional references cannot replace the necessity of a treatment as a whole. There is no real examination (the 23 lines are too brief to be of effective value) of the rôle, policy, developing transformation, structure, working and significance for the working class of the Trades Union Congress, of the Labour Party, or of the Independent Labour Party, or of the working-class press. Yet these are all essential parts of " The Condition of the Working Class." It is characteristic that the Independent Labour Party only appears in two regional references, in the Clydeside and London ; in the latter case a reference is made to the London decision in favour of approaching the Communist International. But the Independent Labour Party as a whole does not appear ; its transformation, disaffiliation from the Labour Party, &c., symptomatic of a profoundly significant process in the working class, has no place in this report. The *Daily Herald* and its character as an " organ " of the official Labour Movement, powerfully revealing the capitalist basis of the Labour Party, has no place. Mondism has no place. The Minority Movement, its experience and outcome, has no place. The militant working class press has no place. It is obvious that, with an approach thus limited (unless we take " Condition " in the bourgeois or medical-officer of-health sense, which was manifestly not the author's intention), we have only a partial and incomplete description of the real " Condition of the Working Class in Britain in 1933."

This criticism should not be taken as in any way diminishing the positive value of the book. On the contrary, the general excellence of this book gives rise to the duty of constructive criticism in order to endeavour to help the way forward to further work, not necessarily in this book, but in future books. The definite, positive value of what is achieved in this book is more important than what is missing. This positive achievement remains as a definite addition to the equipment of the revolutionary working class, for which we can all be grateful.

R. P. D.

RELIGION AND COMMUNISM

Religion and Communism : A Study of Religion and Atheism in Soviet Russia. By Julius F. Hecker. (Chapman & Hall Ltd.) 303 pages. 8s. 6d.

IN the task of building up a Socialist society, the Russian workers and peasants have had to fight religion as one of the most powerful props of the old order. The story of this fight is of the greatest interest to the workers of Britain. Particularly now, when a young but vigorous proletarian atheist movement is developing in this country, is it important that the truth regarding religion and communism should be brought home to the broadest masses of the working class.

Unfortunately, the work under review does not supply the pressing need for a clear and convincing account of " religion and Atheism in Soviet Russia." Readers of the author's previous work, *Moscow Dialogues*, recently reviewed in these columns,[1] will find all the defects of that work repeated in the present, only in a more accentuated form. Hecker is not a dialectical materialist and hence could not expound " Red Philosophy." Still less is he a militant atheist. Indeed, it is precisely the residue of religious ideology in his own mind which

[1]Vol. 15, No. 10. pp. 653–4.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

prevents him enlisting as an active participant in the organised struggle against religion and for communism. Hecker claims (and his publisher repeats the claim) that this work is an " objective " study of the religious situation in the U.S.S.R. and he accuses the militant atheists of that country of lack of " objectivity."

> " Critical literature in the field of religion practically did not exist in Russia previous to the October Revolution . . . Communist authors . . . . had a virgin field before them, but so far they have not produced much of value, lacking the necessary scholarship and frequently losing the necessary objectivity in the controversial atmosphere which existed in Russia after the downfall of Tsarism " (pp. 257-8).

This whole conception of objectivity is radically unsound. As every Marxist knows, it is not the writer who tries to stand above the battle who succeeds in reaching objectivity in the class struggle. The very opposite is the case. The atheist writers of the U.S.S.R. are infinitely more objective in their treatment of religious questions than this petty-bourgeois poseur who tries to sit upon the fence.

The author's theoretical confusion is revealed most clearly in the first chapter (" The Problem Stated ") and the last (" The Outlook "). In the former he tries to answer the question " Is civilised humanity in need of religion? ", and answers it with the assistance of quotations from such worthless bourgeois writers as Niebuhr, Spengler, Otto, etc. Hecker has read assiduously in the literature of militant atheism but he does not accept the Marxist-Leninist view of religion. Instead, he holds to a vague " modernist," " sociological " theory of religion and longs for a " uniform æsthetic symbolic cult, appealing to the imagination of the masses, acting as an inspiration and supplying them with a much-craved-for emotional solidarity " (p. 271). This is simply a belated revival—of course, it should be stated, from one who was never a member of a revolutionary working class party—of the " god-building " notions once associated with the names of Gorki and Lunacharsky, which Lenin has denounced with such strength and acuteness. In fact, Hecker himself refers to this controversy (pp. 185–8) and the fate of Lunacharsky's ideas at the hands of Lenin. It is obvious, however, that he shares Lunacharsky's then views rather than Lenin's on the subject. (Lunacharsky's *Socialism and Religion* is described as a " great work . . . a very able exposition, from the modernist point of view," p. 188.)

Always bearing in mind these criticisms, the book remains of some value and can be read, if carefully, by every worker who is seriously interested in the anti-religious struggle. The chapters (2–8) which attempt to describe the history of religion in Russia before the Revolution comprise more than half the book and contain matter which is nowhere available in such a handy and readable form.

R.W.B.

A BOLSHEVIK AT WORK

Memoirs of a Bolshevik. By O. Piatnitsky. (Martin Lawrence Ltd.) 2s. 6d.

HERE is a book that helps to supply a long-felt and pressing need. Here is a real slice of history for which we have been anxiously waiting. Millions know something of the history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union since 1917 onwards. They know of its power and influence, its leadership and guidance of the magnificent work of socialist construction.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

But how many have even the slightest knowledge of the rise and development of that great party, the early years of its existence and how it fought and worked in the long period of illegality.

In Piatnitsky's memoirs we are given an illuminating insight into the hard and strenuous life of the Bolshevik. He takes us from the time of his first association with the revolutionary movement in 1896 right up till the February revolution in 1917. Piatnitsky brings disillusionment to those who believe that the formation of a party is a simple process. Such as those with certain " ideals " coming together and saying, " Well, suppose we form a party." In his excellent portrayal of the early history of the Bolsheviks he shows clearly that a revolutionary party is a living organism connected by millions of ties with the class from which it springs.

Chapter five of the book is particularly interesting and valuable. Here Piatnitsky describes most excellently how the Moscow Committee carried on its illegal printing and distribution of literature. Leaflets on all current questions were turned out in enormous quantities. Many were specially written for the peasants ; and thousands of Moscow working men and women spent their holidays travelling to the villages to distribute this and other literature.

One cannot refrain from quoting his account in this chapter of what he experienced when placed in charge of the conspirative work of the party in Moscow. He went to work over the underground printing office which was located in the basement of a fruit shop with a policeman stationed just opposite. " The sign dangling outside, which said : The Caucasian Fruit Shop, and wholesale at that, if I remember rightly—was rather more pretentious than the contents of the shop warranted. The basement was filled with boxes : some apparently contained printing supplies which were not yet unpacked, and others were bulging with paper for printing.

" There was artificial light in the basement—either electricity or kerosene, I forget which. After I had examined the basement I returned to the shop. The thud of the American printing-press could be heard below. As soon as some one entered the shop the owner or salesman informed those below that there was a customer in the shop. We decided to fix a bell which would give the signal whether to stop or continue with the work. One comrade, and sometimes two, often worked in the printing shop all night when there was any urgent work to be done.

" I was in touch with the technical department exclusively through the ' owner ' of the shop, Comrade Arshak. In special cases, if I could not wait till the evening when I could find Arshak at home I used to go to the shop in the daytime, taking great precautions. I would go in as a customer and come out with a bag of Caucasian fruits or nuts. Before I knew the city well I had to search for a place where I could buy paper of a suitable size in large quantities. This was none to easy ; for after getting the paper I had to take it away, using every precaution to avoid arousing any suspicion as to the use to which it was to be put or where it was going.

" The paper was sent to a bookbinder in Pimenovsky Alley, where it was cut into the right size and taken by the clerk of the printing office to our depository (No. 1 Pokrovsky Passage). From there the paper was delivered to the shop as merchandise—Caucasian fruit—whenever needed."

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Piatnitsky tells of the big struggle against the agent provocateurs who entered the ranks of the party. He mentions his fight against Malinovsky the well-known provocateur, whom Lenin frequently referred to.

The memoirs introduce you to the life of a Bolshevik abroad in Paris, Berlin and other places, and Piatnitsky's association and impressions of the working-class movement in these countries. His experiences provide many valuable lessons and should be learned by all who would play their part in the battle against capitalism.

G.W.M.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

East and West in Religion. S. Radhakrishnan. (Allen & Unwin.) 146 pp. 4s. 6d.

The Philosophy of Communism. John MacMurray. (Faber & Faber.) 96 pp. 3s. 6d.

Standard Prices and the Agricultural Marketing Acts. Rural Reconstruction Association. 12 pp. 6d.

Murder Camp in Hohenstein. Peter Conrad. (Martin Lawrence.) 104 pp. 1s.

An exposure of the Unemployment Social Service Schemes. Wal Hannington. (National Unemployed Workers' Movement.) 16 pp. 1d.

Australia's Government Bank. L. C. Jaungey, Ph.D. (Cranley & Day.) 288 pp. 7s. 6d.

Problems of Peace. Various authors. Eighth Series: Lectures delivered at the Geneva Institute of International Relations. (Allen & Unwin.) 291 pp. 8s. 6d.

The War for the Land in Ireland. Brian O'Neill. Introduction by Peadar O'Donnell. Appendix and Tables. (Martin Lawrence.) 201 pp. 5s.

Lenin on the I.L.P. Introduction: William Rust. (Modern Books Ltd.) 53 pp. 3d.

Twenty-one Points of the Communist International. O. Piatnitsky. (Modern Books Ltd.) 32 pp. 1d.

The Communist Party of Germany Lives and Fights. (The banned literature distribution under the Hitler Terror.) (Modern Books Ltd.) 31 pp. 2d.

The Second International in Dissolution. Bela Kun. (Modern Books Ltd.) 84 pp. 6d.

R. PAGE ARNOT

"The Relation of Economics to Dialectical Materialism"

Chairman: MAURICE DOBB

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 31st, 1934, 8-15 p.m.
London School of Hygiene, Keppel Street, W.C.1

Society for Cultural Relations with the U.S.S.R., 1 Montague Street, W.C.1
MUSEUM 5254

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DAILY INFORMATION

is essential in the present epoch of wars and revolutions

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION OF THE CLASS WAR CAN ONLY BE FOUND DAILY IN THE

DAILY WORKER

7d. per week, post free

41 TABERNACLE STREET, LONDON, E.C.2

Do you read regularly

THE EDUCATIONAL WORKER

THE ORGAN OF THE

Educational Workers' League

(LATE TEACHERS' LABOUR LEAGUE)

It is the only publication dealing with the problems of Teachers, Schools and Scholars from a militant working class point of view

Price 2½d. per month, or 2/6 per annum, post free

Out on first of the month

Order now from **The Manager, 7 John Street, London, W.C.1**

AGENTS

If you have no agent in your district to handle supplies of the "Labour Monthly," you may yourself become an agent on our usual bulk order terms. This applies to both home and abroad and is good for a supply of three or more copies.

WRITE FOR INFORMATION

MANAGER,

"LABOUR MONTHLY"

7 John Street, London, W.C.1

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

En Passant . . .

May we remind you that the Leicester Co-operative Printing Society, equipped with four spacious factories, up-to-the-minute machinery and skilled craftsmen, is always at your service. For a considerable number of years this firm has been the "pantheon" of everything appertaining to the art of Printing, and now, combined with departments for Box-making and Stationery, is capable of undertaking work of every description. No order is too small or too large but that it will receive our utmost attention—and at the right price.

The Sign of Quality

LEICESTER CO-OPERATIVE PRINTING SOCIETY LIMITED

LEICESTER: HEAD OFFICE, CHURCH GATE
BOX FACTORY: SHORT STREET, LEICESTER
LONDON: 58 GOUGH STREET, W.C.1
KETTERING: 24 KING STREET

Published by the Proprietors, the Trinity Trust, 7 John Street, W.C.1, and Printed by Leicester Co-operative Printing Society Limited, 99 Church Gate, Leicester

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED